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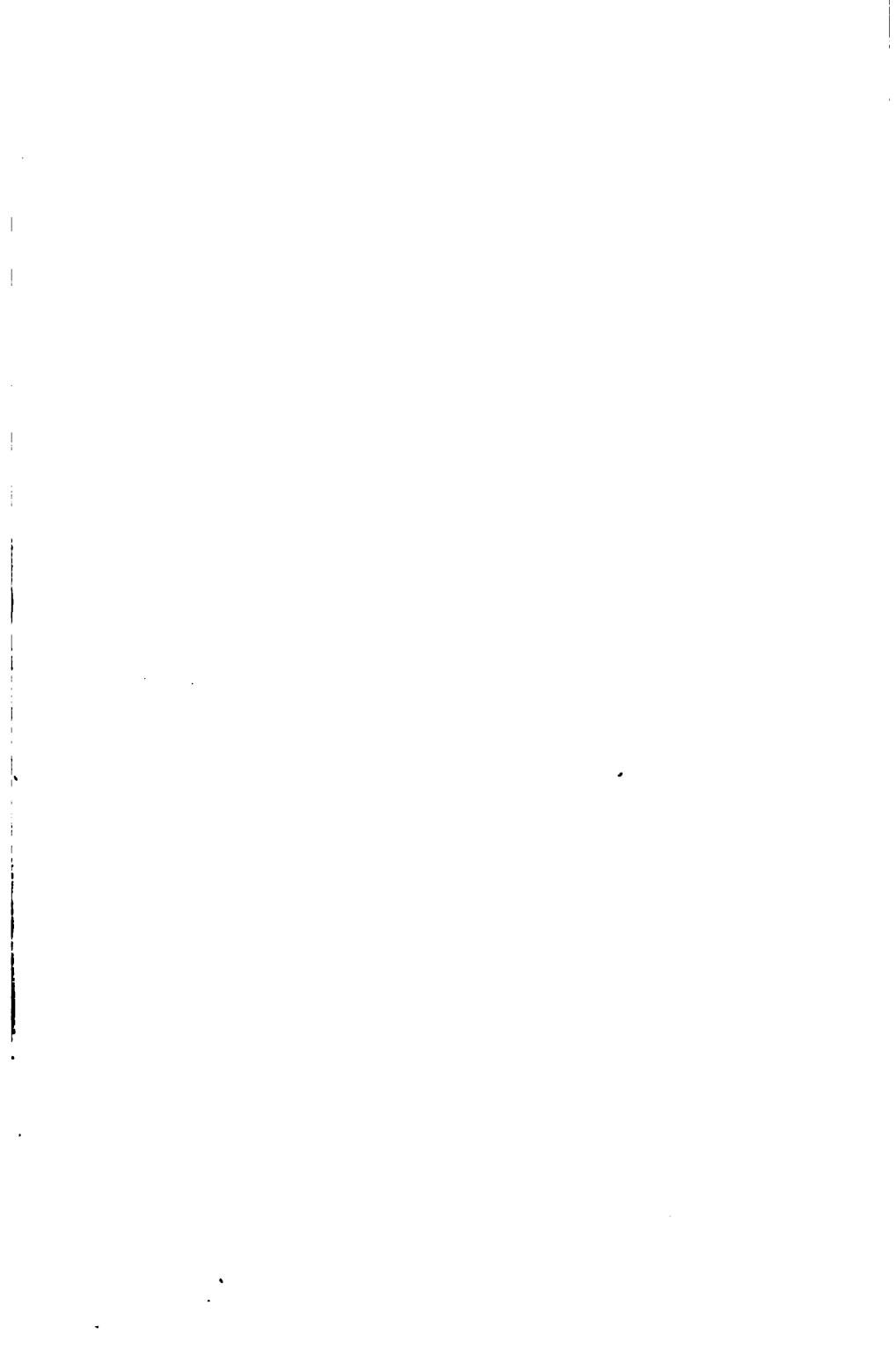
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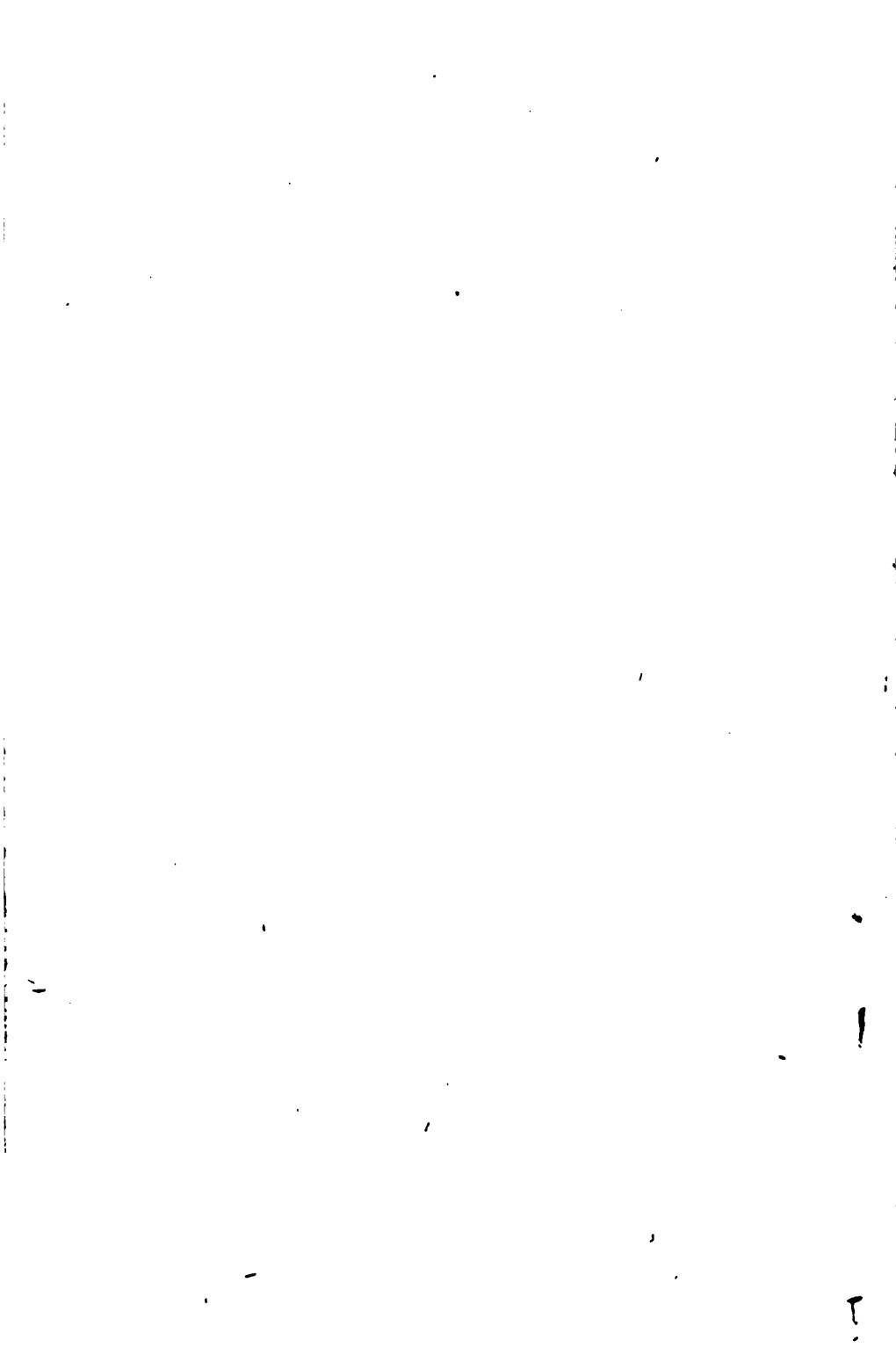
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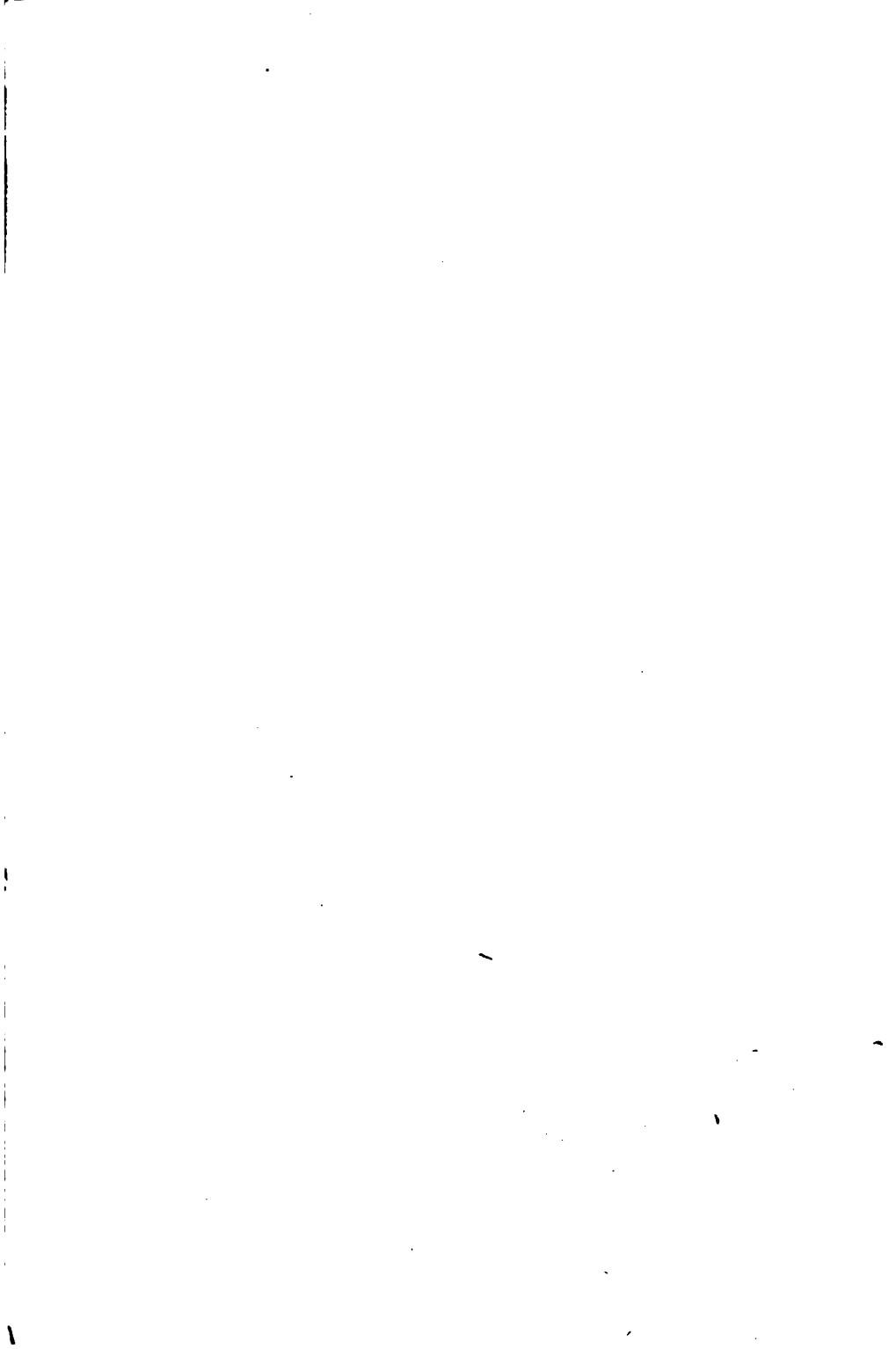
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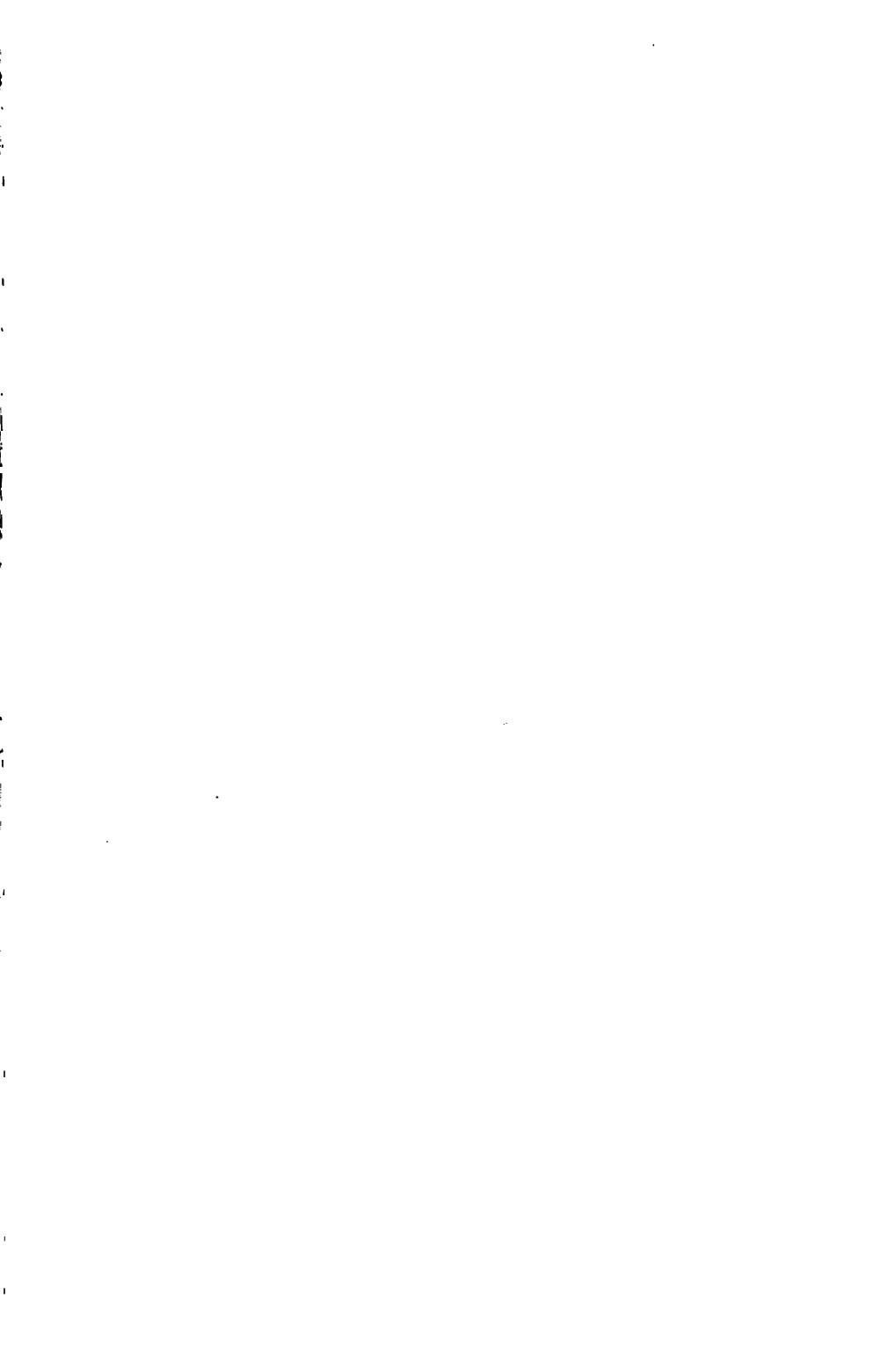
















The Tops of the Lanky Poplars Cut a "V" with the Sky

RIBBON ROADS

A MOTOR TOUR ABROAD

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BY

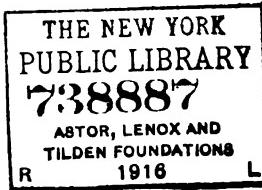
A. T. and B. R. WOOD

WITH 80 ILLUSTRATIONS AND 2 MAPS.

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MARY WARD
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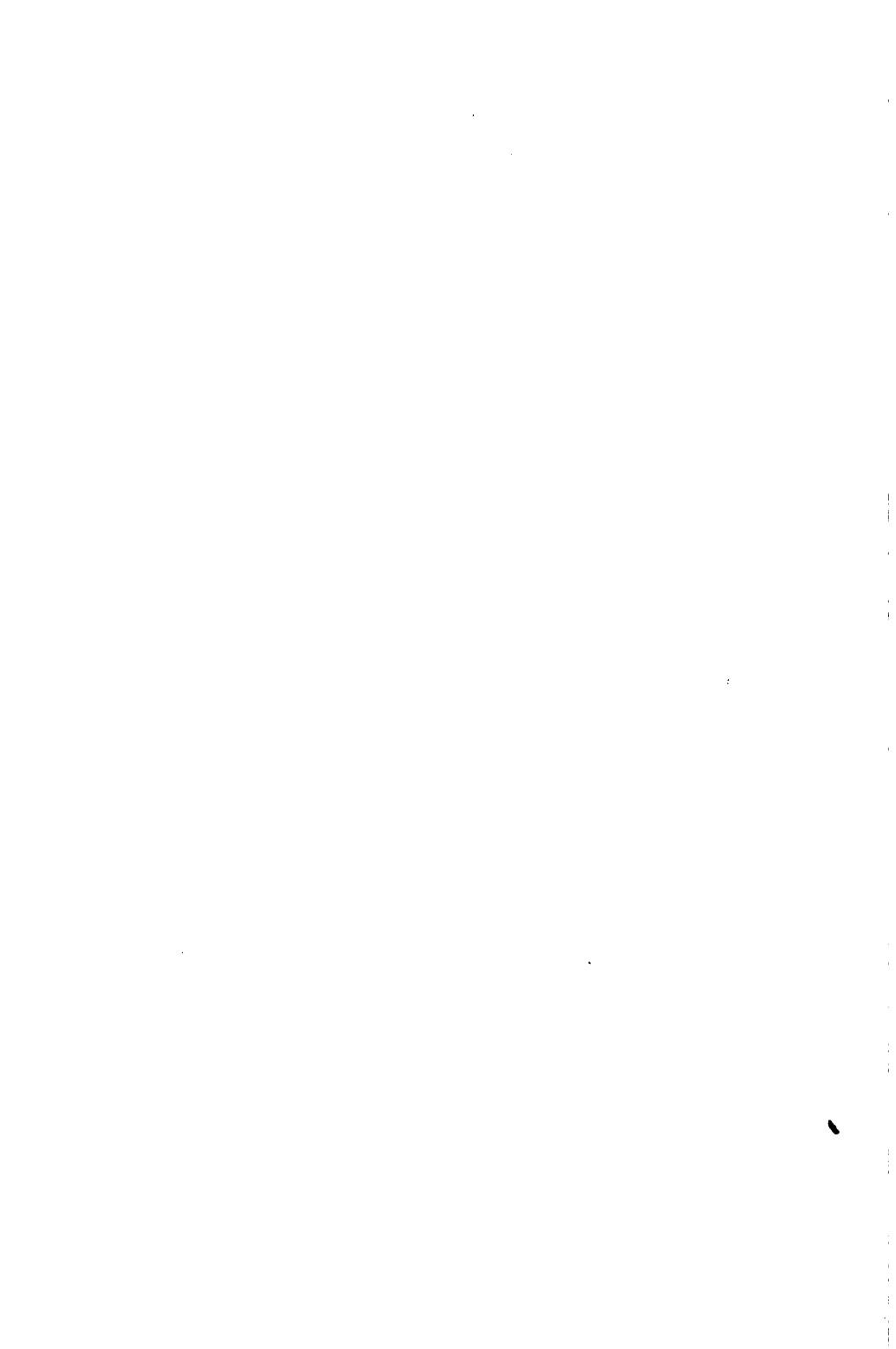
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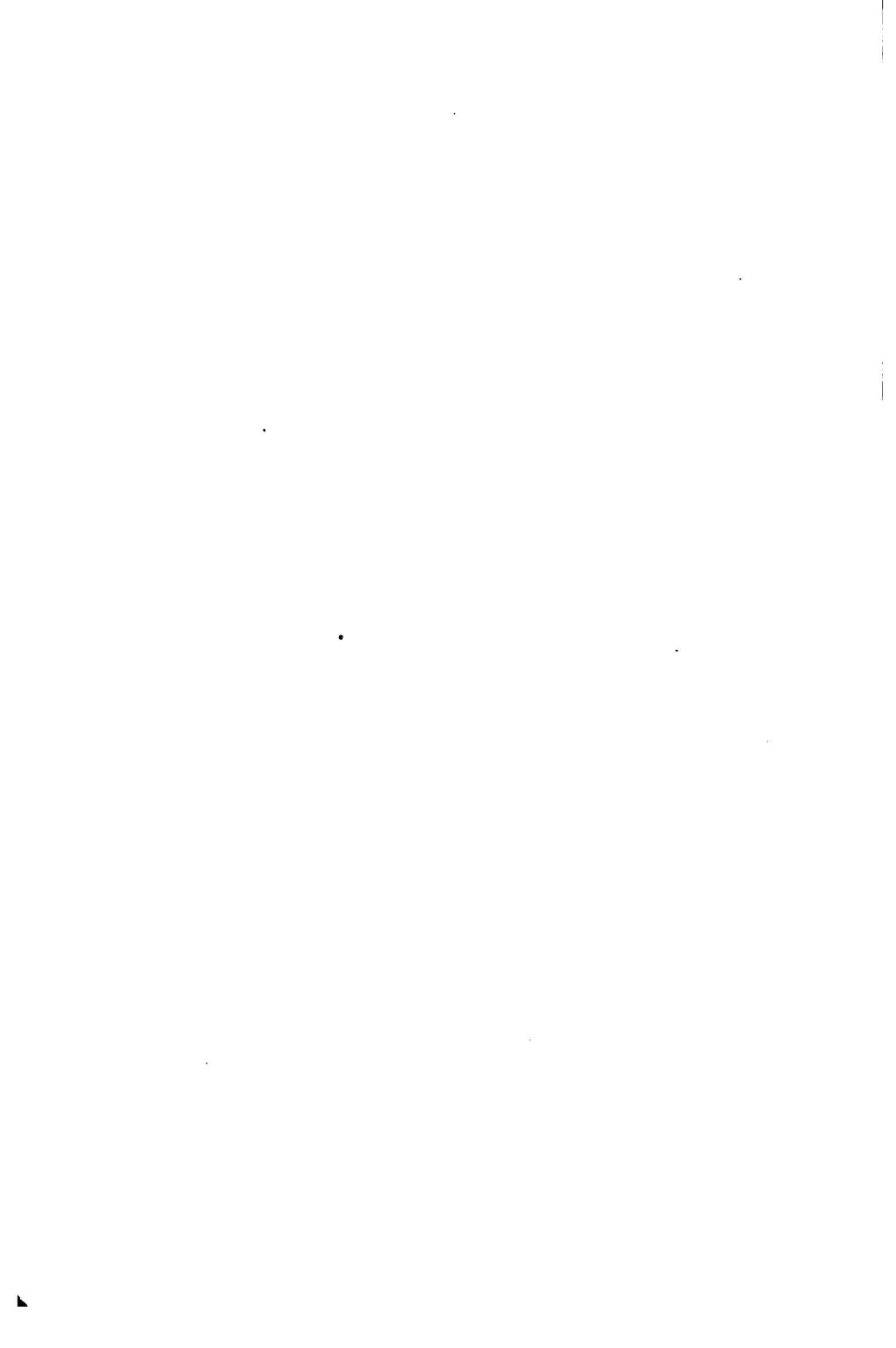
PART I

THE BRITISH ISLES





Canterbury: The Approach to the Cathedral



RIBBON ROADS

CHAPTER I

A FOREWORD

THE motor-car has added infinitely to the enjoyment of travelling. Given good roads and fine weather, it is the ideal pleasure-vehicle of the present day. It has done away with many annoyances caused by the railways: the noise and bustle of stations and the close confinement of hot stuffy trains have been superseded by the peace and freedom of the open country; and the worry and uncertainty of missing connections have given place to a sense of relief, deep rooted in the knowledge of no restriction to the fixed hours of exacting time-tables. It combines the practical with the picturesque,—it is a compromise between the stage-coach and the train.

A country should not be seen from a train window; an intimate knowledge of it can never be acquired in that way. Those hasty inadequate views, snatched at intervals as the train whirls through an interest-laden landscape, are sufficient to give only the most superficial of impressions. In order to be thoroughly appreciated a country should be seen leisurely.

The motor-car enables one to accomplish this end. By means of it one can make excursions from the well-known into the less familiar districts and can discover for oneself interest-spots other than those mentioned in a red-bound guide-book. The pace can be regulated at will. Now travelling slowly where the landscape is full of charm, now hurrying faster (if the road be good) through stretches of barren country, one can always gain a deeper insight into the manners and customs of out-of-the-way communities.

There is a mistaken idea that all interest centres in the towns and cities alone, and that the surrounding country has been drained in order to supply that interest. The charm of the pastoral is too often neglected for the limited attractions of the urban.



Christchurch Priory



Many little towns and hamlets, far withdrawn from the humdrum of busy modern life and pervaded by an atmosphere of quiet seclusion, often offer unexpected attractions to the passing motorist. They compel him to stop and persuade him to remain. They fix his attention and demand his appreciation. When he has gone they thrust their memories upon him. He is haunted by the remembrance of what he has seen: of clustering cottages, low-thatched and smiling, covered by clinging creepers and bordering on grass-grown lanes; of quaint market-places filled with heterogeneous collections of busy peasants, sleek healthy oxen, green vegetables, and ripe red fruit; of narrow crooked streets, ill-lighted and unevenly cobbled, lined with ancient houses, whose overlapping stories reach out to embrace each other from either side the road; and of pretty homes neatly painted, which lay claim to respectability through their trim flower-beds and their well-kept gardens.

To tour abroad is like a progression through a picture-gallery. The paintings are the sights and scenes that crowd thick upon one another at every step forward. But the

pictures are not dull lifeless canvases. They are the little towns and the great cities, the cultivated fields and the barren shores, the breathless woods and the wind-swept plains, the low-lying valleys and the high-placed mountains.

There is an endless enjoyment in a flight through the country, an indescribable charm in entering a town by other than the route laid down by rails, and an unaccountable fascination (sometimes marred, however, by a slight resentment against a misleading director) in threading a way through unfamiliar streets. To feel oneself driven on and on over flowing river-like roads, smooth as pavement and white as chalk; to see each moment new and delightful aspects of the ever-unfolding country; to smell the sweet-scented air fresh-blown from the flowered fields; to hear the rush of the wind as the car leaps forward from speed to speed—sensations such as these cannot fail to make a man once a motorist always a motorist.

We had arrived at this conclusion the summer before our tour abroad. In fact, so ardent had we become that, at the close of the



Exeter: "Old Mol's" Coffee-House

automobiling season, we longed—as Alexander—for new worlds to conquer. With this idea in mind, we began to turn our attention to books and maps of foreign travel, and soon much literature descriptive of motoring abroad was devoured with voracious greed. Maps were studied with an interest which was truly remarkable, in that maps, in general, to the disinterested, are little more than pieces of paper with blotches of different colours on them. Night after night the chief topic of conversation was the prospective tour. The pros and cons of various routes were weighed in the balance—the possibilities of this discussed, the impracticabilities of that discovered—and it was only after much deliberation that our itinerary was finally decided upon.

Europe is such a treasure-house of interest that it is impossible to see everything during one short summer tour. For us, hundreds of attractive places, all worthy of at least some attention, were out of the question and had to be foregone, owing to the difficulty of suiting our route to their geographical positions. Among them were a few appealing cathedral towns. But these, happily, were

postponed to the proverbial "next-time" visit.

It is a simple matter to lay a finger on the map and say "here" and "here" and "here" shall one go: to carry out intentions is an entirely different proposition. For there may be many miles between each "here," and time may be short, and other places yet to be visited.

So we planned a tour which would lead us through widely-varying scenes, now taking us through quiet English towns, now across the bleak brown moors of Scotland to the hills, and past the peasant homes of Ireland; now giving us canal and windmill pictures from the top of Holland dykes, and field and forest outlooks beyond the German highways; an arrow-flight through France to reach Grenoble; across the Alps—a climb into the clouds—to enter Italy; Venice, Florence, Rome; a breath of the Mediterranean from the Riviera; France again; the château country,—then Paris.

It was a long tour to undertake. But we looked for few difficulties since nowadays continental touring has become a general pastime. We relied on the good roads to



An Ancient Building at Glastonbury



pave the way from place to place, on the little inns to offer shelter for the night, and, above all, on the motor-car to carry us wherever we wished to go.

We planned to visit the British Isles first, so as to get a late spring glimpse of England, to avoid as far as possible the rains and mists of Scotland, and to see Ireland decked in her early summer verdure. We arranged to be in Holland and Germany when those countries were in the full bloom of summer; it is then that the little rustic villages present their most charming aspects and the hay-fields are turning yellow for the late July harvest under the influence of the ardent sun. On through Italy in August we would go, with Rome and Venice the lodestars. Even if the weather might be hot we could at least cool our faces in the sea-city with breezes off the Adriatic.

But of our returning flight to Paris we thought little. It seemed too remote even to speculate upon. For with it over our trip would have ended and our long-dreamed-of tour have become a reality.

CHAPTER II

ALONG THE SOUTHERN ENGLISH COAST

A GLORIOUS afternoon found us on our way to Windsor. We had left London behind with its noise and bustle and crowds, and had gladly turned the car's bonnet country-ward to take in exchange the quiet of rural thoroughfares. In the early afternoon, the old Palace at Hampton Court had claimed us, and we had spent several hours there wandering about the charming gardens and going through the historic rooms. Later in the day, when the trees were beginning to throw their shadows across the road and when the sun was slanting over the fields in weaker warmth, we took leave of the court and drove slowly on to Windsor. We followed the Thames, bending with its loops and turns, over hedge-bordered roads until we reached the royal town. Long before we had entered, however, we had caught our first glimpse of



Bath: The Abbey



Along the Southern English Coast 11

the distant castle-towers rising above the tree tops.

Windsor is an interesting old town. The houses rise from the sidewalks in very irregular fashion, some attaining the height of five stories, while others, less aspiring, boast only of a ground floor. Cobblestones pave the hilly streets, and over these, vehicles of varied description make clattering progress. The castle dominates everything. A magnificent pile of masonry, embattled and encircled by thick stone walls, it frowns down upon the town gathered at its base, overawing it, one might say, by its impressiveness. Seen from across the river, it stretches out in a long, irregular line, with a central keep rising highest of all.

Early the next morning, after we had paid a short visit to Eton, we set out on a long run to Canterbury.

All day the road led through charming country—a country which was typically English in its luxuriant growth of tree and flower. It took us first through stretches of meadow-like land and gave us views of open fields and shady commons. Then it brought us into a gently rising district, where the farmhouses

overlooked their acres from the tops of swelling hillocks and where, now and then, embattled church-towers sprang from among the trees. And lastly, it led us a steeper course as it progressed deeper into the heart of Kent.

All day we feasted our delighted eyes on landscape which was only English. All day we passed through a country which was prosperous and beautiful. In the fields—the square, hedged fields that reminded one of huge checkerboards—cattle browsed from morn till night, never tiring of nor ceasing to chew the tender grass which covered the country with a bright emerald carpet. Everywhere there were cows and sheep and lambs. The latter would run away in frightened haste as the motor passed, jumping back from the roadside in scattered flocks. Drawn back from the highway and half-smothered in masses of screening foliage, tiny homesteads showed white among the green. They were pretty farmhouses, with their thatched roofs, their curtained windows, and their flower-trained walls. All about them flowers grew in luxuriant profusion: roses and rhododendrons and phlox brightened their gardens;



Lichfield: The Cathedral

daisies and buttercups embroidered their fields.

We lunched at the "White Hart" at Reigate. Afterwards we strolled about the trim gardens behind the hotel and saw the caves, a series of subterranean passages in which, it is said, the early Christians used to worship, and which we explored by the aid of a guide and flickering candles. Then we set out for Canterbury.

The road was a continuation of the morning's highway, and led through some beautiful towns. Westerham, Sevenoaks, and Maidstone were all attractive with their curving streets, their neat brick houses, and their well-kept lawns. Just outside of Sevenoaks we passed Knole Park, and got peeps of that stately mansion as we slipped by. There were, however, many other splendid country-seats, set in the midst of their spreading parks, whose names were unknown to us.

The little villages through which the road brought us were delightfully rural. Often we came upon them quite unexpectedly, for they lurked behind hidden bends or tucked themselves away in the folds of the slopes; and the road dived into them and out again

before we had time to realise it. Usually they began and ended in their high-street and had neat buildings lining either side, with an inn or two holding out quaint signboards. There was always an ivy-covered church rising from among tall old trees, its not-too-high belfry making friends with the tree tops; and surrounding it on all sides was the little graveyard in which the "forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

We did not stop at any of these roadside hamlets, however. Canterbury with its ancient cathedral acting as magnet was drawing us on.

Just as at Windsor the castle is the chief object of interest, so at Canterbury, the cathedral claims all attention. As one enters the close through a very ancient gateway the wonderful building presses itself upon the sight immediately. It is impossible to let the gaze wander from it, so completely does it hold one spellbound. Seen from the south-west, where it is not half-smothered in spreading trees and where its length is not interrupted by projecting cloisters, it stretches away in a long, irregular pile of stone. Its two western towers are almost dwarfed by



Haddon Hall

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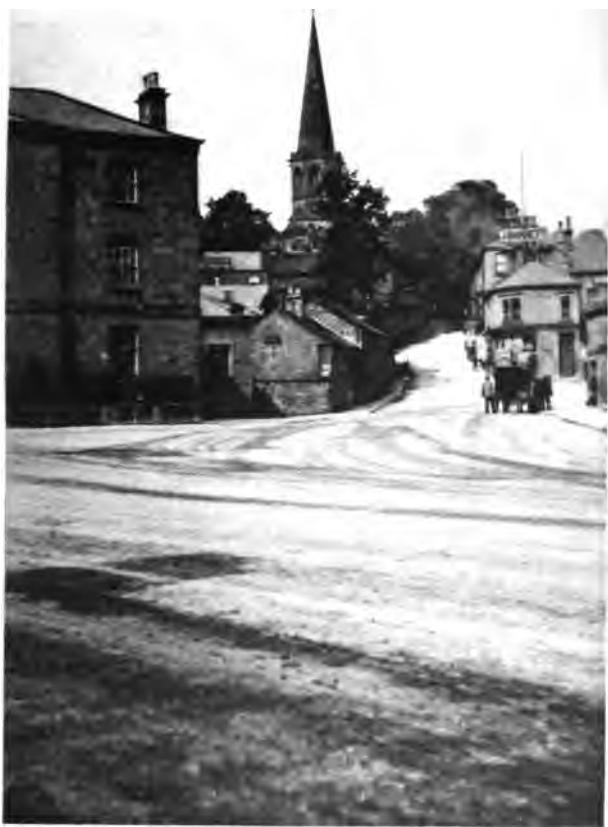
the splendid central tower which springs so loftily from the juncture of the nave and lower transepts. The little Norman tower, carved in jagged patterns with tiers of rounded arches resting one upon the other, looks like a miniature belfry when compared with the greater Gothic structure which overshadows it.

Walking to the east, still on the side where the grass creeps out in a little lawn to meet the driveway, the visitor can trace the changes of architecture in the building—14th century Gothic towards the west but resolving into Early English and Norman as the east is reached. And still following around past the “corona” of the cathedral he comes upon the ruins of the ancient monastery where only huge arches and crumbling pillars leave trace of what was once the former building.

Later on, when he has entered and has had a first glimpse of the long-drawn nave, with its massive pillars and soaring roof, of the dim choir with its richly carved stalls, and of the high-placed altar, with its candles and its altar-cloths—he gives himself into the guidance of a verger and is conducted through the various chapels.

The old man leads all about the place. He points out the tombs of long-dead prelates of the church and indicates, with conscious pride, the rail-enclosed tomb of the warrior Black Prince. He walks behind the great altar to the Trinity Chapel to show the spot where formerly the shrine of the murdered Thomas à Becket stood and to point out the wonderful "miracle windows" of stained glass which depict various scenes of the life of the martyred saint. Then conducting on through many aisles and many doorways, he enters at length the chapter-house, the ancient, but restored, building in which, long ago, the priors of the monastery used to do business. Finally, the cloisters are visited, and one wanders around them, looking up now and then through the carved openings to scan the soaring central tower, or glancing sometimes downward to read an inscription cut into the flags beneath the feet.

Canterbury is an odd, old town. Its streets are narrow and winding, and the houses which line them face the roadways in picturesque irregularities of gable and timbered fronts. It is a typical English cathedral-town, whose quiet atmosphere takes hold of



Bakewell: An Ideal Country Village

the visitor and makes him forget the stir of larger cities.

In the morning we left in a rain-shower, with dull skies above and wet roads beneath. As we flew on to Dover the green fields spread out on either side, undulating gently like long swells driven shoreward by a falling wind. The hedges were dripping with raindrops; the leaves looked glossy and clean, for the water had washed away the roadside dust which, yesterday, had powdered them in a light grey coating. The road splashed water to the very ditches as the car's wheels skimmed into the puddles, and its surface was muddy and slippery from the rain.

The whole countryside was beautifully fresh and green. The nearer fields, all wet and glistening, were dotted with sheep and lambs—wet, too—which grazed among the grasses in timid flocks; the farther reaches half-hidden in a thin mist that drifted across country, blurring the trees, the church-towers, and the farmhouses.

Many hop-fields were in the district. The vines trailed up long wooden poles in rows across the fields, and looked like masses of ivy grown wild in an open stretch of forest.

There were no pickers out; the picking season had not as yet commenced, and the hops were only ripening for the harvest later on. Always in the vicinity, hop-houses presenting cylindrical towers and conical roofs between the trees, could be seen. They were picturesque buildings and quite a feature of the Kentish landscape.

As we neared the coast, the earth became more chalky. Patches of white showed on the hillsides, and the country grew barer and less wooded. The road still led up and down, sweeping over high-rising surges of land and dropping deep into the trough of the land-waves, and still passed tiny villages, emerald fields and nestling farmhouses. The atmosphere, too, indicated that water lay ahead. The wind had freshened and had brought with it the cold dampness of the sea. Heavy clouds hung low over the country like a dark curtain and threatened to pour down volumes of unneeded rain at any moment. They prevented the sun from flooding the fields in welcome warmth or revealing in the landscape the soft shades of summer.

When we had crested a rise and had a wide view of the surrounding country, a glimpse of

A Bridge across the Wye



the sea suddenly broke upon our eyes—a sullen expanse of water, dotted with ships and boats.

We did not stop long at Dover. Although the castle would have been interesting to visit and the outlook from the ramparts splendid, yet the cloudy day urged us on in the hopes of finding better weather ahead. And we were not disappointed. Later, the sun came out, fitfully at first, but gaining strength as it dispersed the clouds, and poured across the land and sea in cheerful rays. We descended into Folkestone by a steep, curving hill, and all the way down had spread out below us the panorama of the Channel, the roof-tops of the town, and the shelving coast-line. To the left the water stretched back till lost in mist; directly beneath, lay the little town, encircled by the sloping hills; while to the right, the country broke away in green ripples which, farther back, surged into rising land.

At Hythe we lunched at a charming hotel overlooking the sea, and then in the afternoon continued on towards Hastings and Bexhill-on-Sea.

A delightful run brought us to the latter place. The road led across the Marshes of

Romney and gave us views both of the flat water-veined fields and of the motionless Channel. It traversed the low-lying ground in straight lines, running sometimes parallel with the water, sometimes farther inland where the Channel was screened by hedges or by clumps of wind-swept trees. The fields were bright in mustard seed. They made brilliant patches of colour in the landscape. They contrasted in bright yellow tones from the grass that grew in emerald shades close to the water. In the distant background the country rolled away in rising slopes, lighting and obscuring as the sunshine played over it from between a hurrying cloud.

Several interesting towns lay on the route: old Winchelsea, on a rising slope, which is approached by a sharp hill and entered under a feudal gateway; Rye, formerly one of the celebrated Cinq-Ports, with its fishing-smacks and an array of nets drying in the sun; and, most interesting of all, Hastings with its history of ancient times. At this latter place, the ruined castle, which was probably constructed by William the Conqueror, looks down on the modern watering-place, and amidst the ugliness of many hotels strikes a



York: A Glimpse of the Minster's Central Tower



contrasting note. As we passed beneath it, we gazed up at the crumbling towers and wondered for how many more centuries they would continue to brave time and the elements.

Bexhill-on-Sea was but a short run from Hastings, and we pushed on there and stayed for the night. In the morning, after taking a walk along the splendid promenade which faces the ocean and after seeing the wide expanse of Channel from the shore, we started off again on our way to Portsmouth.

Pevensey Castle was the first object which attracted our attention.

The ruins of the castle are situated on a slight rise of land—battered walls and falling towers which lift themselves beyond a willow-fringed moat. Ivy and moss cover them, here and there, in a soft green mantle, and, by a network of strong fibres, keep the stones together—although many of these have dropped into the half-dried moat and have doubtless frightened the graceful swan which looks so lonely floating all alone among the rushes. It is an historic ruin, for near at hand William the Conqueror is supposed to have landed when he came from Normandy in 1066.

Just across the street from the castle is a tiny cottage, with slanting roof and leaded windows. It is surrounded by a fence and in summer is half-embowered in a mass of flowers. This interesting building goes by the name of the Mint House. In one of its rooms near to the kitchen, the counterfeiters, years ago, used to coin gold and silver, and to-day may be seen the implements they used, the old fireplace where they heated their irons, and the stools on which they sat. The cottage is full of curious nooks. Each room is very small and overladen with old-fashioned furniture, pictures, and china; but the "ghost room" is pointed out as most interesting of all.

A winding way leads to Eastbourne. The road curves in and out the hedges in dangerous turns. In places it is so narrow that there is scarcely room for two large motors to pass. As, however, it leads through a pastoral country one is content to drive slowly.

Eastbourne and Brighton are among the largest watering-places that lie on the South Coast. Both are very similar for each has a splendid beach, a far-reaching promenade, and numerous hotels. While the former is the more prettily situated of the two, with its



An English Way-Side Cottage

great hill behind and the curving coast-line on its either hand, Brighton can at least boast of a pavilion built by George IV, which, ever since its erection, has been celebrated for its ugliness. It is a great chocolate-coloured building with oriental balconies and bulging domes, and is set in the midst of a garden in the principal part of the town.

We did not stop but pressed on to Portsmouth, passing through two interesting places on the way. Arundel and Chichester both held out differing attractions: the former a splendid castle—the property of the Duke of Norfolk—the latter a cathedral.

On nearing Arundel, the first sight of the castle is caught as one emerges from a wooded thicket and descends upon the town. It stands on a slight rise of land, outlining itself in a series of crenellated fortifications against a background of dark-green foliage. It dominates the little town which bears its name in a very lordly fashion and contrasts markedly in size with the houses that follow the street in unpretentious irregularity up to its very entrance-gates. In order to see the interior, however, it is necessary to come to Arundel on certain days; and if the visitor

be so unfortunate as to arrive at other than those times appointed he is forced to leave the town having made only an exterior acquaintance of the feudal building.

Chichester, however, acts as a consolation to the disappointment of Arundel. Its cathedral's doors are always open. One can walk at will through the little churchyard which surrounds the building, examining here and there the inscriptions carved on the different tombstones, or letting the gaze rest upon the thin spire which shoots from a square tower to taper far above to a weathercock. Then, after wandering through the cloisters and admiring them for their very smallness—they are miniature as compared with those of other greater English cathedrals—one arrives at last in front of the western doors which give access to the interior.

A ten or fifteen minutes wait, in which the minutes slipped by to the accompaniment of an afternoon service—an accompaniment of mellow organ notes, of choristers' voices, and of sunbeams slanting in through the windows and falling on the people and on the flagged floor,—and we came away, sought the car, and then resumed our journey to Portsmouth.



Melrose Abbey

Along the Southern English Coast 25

As we left, we cast a backward glance upon the Market-Cross, which, near to the cathedral, springs up from the roadway like a huge Gothic crown. It ranks second in the category of the town's interest-spots, for it is very noted and very old. The figures and the carvings that decorate it are scarred and broken, and look as if they might have suffered at the hands of a less appreciative generation than our own; but in spite of its disfigurements and defacements it is well preserved, and stands an almost perfect example of an ancient market-cross.

After a run through green fields that sweep away to the hills; down hedge-bordered lanes that are tree-shaded and cool; into little villages that border on the road; past tiny cottages half-screened by flowers, we reached Portsmouth and the sea.

Portsmouth is always an interesting town. There is a naval air about the place which makes it gay in spite of the impressive battleships that ride at anchor in the harbour. Its streets are usually livened by the sight of blue-jackets and of red-coated marines, and often ring with the shouts of those who are especially enjoying the liberties of a day ashore.

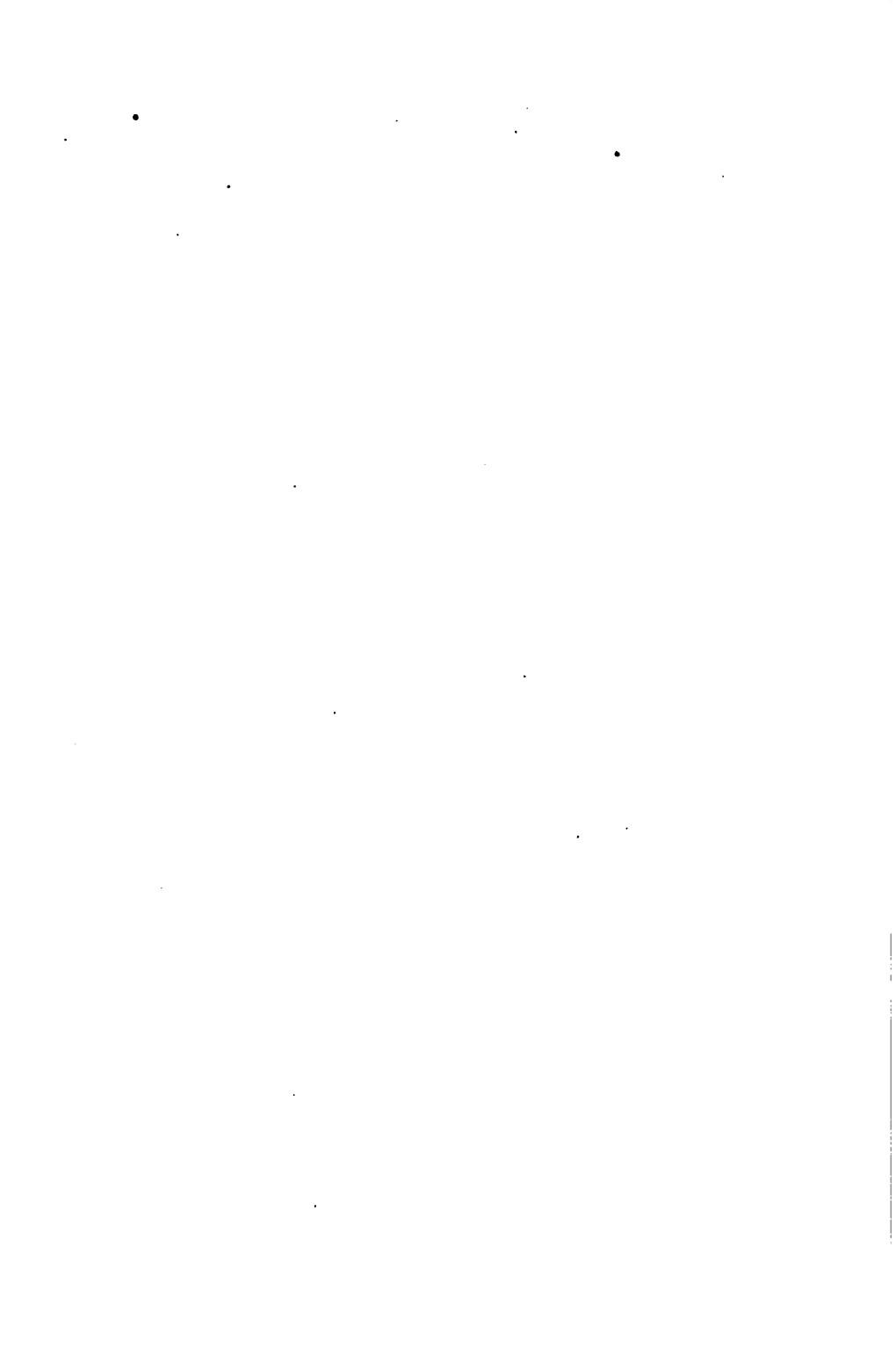
But on the occasion of a great naval review, when battleship and cruiser, torpedo and submarine have been gathered together in the narrow strip of water which divides the Isle of Wight from the larger island, Portsmouth is doubly agreeable to visit. It is then that it can be seen at its best. Its inhabitants, in honour of the event, throng the streets in gala attire; visitors crowd along the sea front and the promenades; and the ferry-boats, gay in flags and pennants, steam the sightseers out to view the fleet.

One is fortunate to arrive at the town on such an occasion. Especially so, if able to board a battleship, go through the formidable vessel, and see for oneself the conditions under which life for a sailor is made so different from the existence of a man ashore. Then to climb down into a speedy picket and to make a tour of the fleet, skirting quite close to the gigantic men-of-war or slipping swiftly between the long steel passageways, is an experience as interesting as it is enjoyable.

While at Southsea it is a simple matter to cross over to the Isle of Wight and spend a day there. If the motorist deserts his car for the less speedy if more picturesque coach-and-



Awaiting the Boat at Onich Ferry



four, he is able to get an excellent idea of the island during the drive from Ryde to Ventnor. It is scarcely worth the trouble of taking a car across for the day. The hedges that line the roadways are so high, and the roads themselves so narrow, that, in a motor, one can neither get the sweeping views of the country permissible from a coach-top, nor experience the undefinable pleasure of a swift drive down a long straight highway.

Shortly after leaving Portsmouth the road leads through the little village of Porchester and permits a distant view of the ruined castle which gives its name to the place. The ruin stands on the shores of a curving bay, not far from the hamlet, and makes a charming picture of crumbling masonry and an ivy-covered keep. The village itself has no attractions. It is merely a collection of humble houses which rise from the street, and no imposing church helps to lift it above its ordinary level. We slipped through the place and were in the country again in a moment.

An uneventful drive brought us to Southampton. The country lay flat and low. The fields reached back from the roadside in level

lines. There were few picturesque villages on the route to offer quaint cottages or odd market-places. But after Southampton was passed through, after the busy port, its ship-crowded harbour, and its ancient stone walls were left behind, the land gradually changed in character.

Soon we dived into the old New Forest and had a splendid run among the trees. The road led straight into the heart of the ancient wood and forced its way through glade and thicket in quick succession. Now running where the oaks rise up in thinner ranks and where ferns and moss cover the ground in a carpet of softest green, and now through denser areas where the sun scarcely filters in between the leaves to dry the ground that lies damp and moist beneath the underbrush, it always showed the forest under varying moods. It led out into the open, too, and permitted wider views of barren stretches and of gorse-grown land.

In these open spaces rhododendrons grew in wild disorder. They rose in great bushes above the dull brown gorse and contrasted vividly with the grass and the forest background in glorious patches of lavender and



On the Road to Belfast

pink. And often they lined the roadside in long stretches at a time and made the highway an avenue of brilliant colour down which to drive.

Many ponies were grazing in the open. They grouped themselves in scattered herds as they rolled or fed among the grasses. They were small, sturdy beasts, much like Shetland ponies, only grown larger. Some of them appeared to be quite wild; the slightest noise sent them galloping away from the roadside to seek shelter farther afield. They never waited to make acquaintance of a motor, for as soon as they caught sight of one emerging from the trees and bearing down upon them across an open stretch of road, they dashed off in a stampede of fright.

The highway then dived into another thicket, plunged from the sunlight into the shade; out again: for always the road played touch and go with the forest and the open.

We were sorry to leave the New Forest. The drive through the woods had been a complete contrast to the runs along the coast. We had willingly taken in exchange the sight of trees and bushes for the wide expanse of sea-scape. But although we regretted that the

run had not been longer, there were compensations in the drive ahead. Christchurch, among other towns, was a quaint place which offered us a beautiful priory church.

The ancient building lies charmingly situated on the banks of a stream and is surrounded by a graveyard filled with old monuments and tombstones. The north entrance—a well-carved Gothic door drawn back and protected by an arched portico—is approached under an avenue of trees; and this shaded walk lends an additional charm to the entrance.

Although the exterior is very beautiful, with its square tower, its projecting transepts, and its lattice-like stone tracing on the walls, it is the interior which demands the more appreciation. As one enters, a Norman architecture strikes the eye. On either side, forming the nave, three tiers of Norman arches rise up one upon the other, the lowest and greatest representing the Father, the middle, with two arches combined in one, symbolising the Son in man, and the topmost, through which the light streams, the Holy Ghost. At the rear of the choir, rising behind the altar, the reredos, a splendid piece of workmanship,



Irish "Paddies"

tells the story of the genealogical "Tree of Jesse" in marble words.

An old verger showed us through the various chapels. He proudly pointed out the exquisite Salisbury Chantry, a veritable masterpiece in stone, drawing our attention to its delicately-fretted window-frames and the lace-like, carving of the ceiling. He related several interesting stories connected with the abbey: of the miraculous beam which, at the supposed intervention of Christ, grew in a night to aid the builders in their work of construction; of the various lepers who used to come and receive the sacrament at the little window specially constructed in the wall of one of the side chapels for their use and through which they received the bread and wine from the interior of the church.

We left at length casting many a backward glance on the beautiful priory, its tree-lined approach, and its grass-grown graveyard.

Bournemouth's shop-windows and splendid sea-scape held out alluring arms; but we resisted the temptation to stay and satisfied ourselves with a drive along its hotel-lined promenade.

An interesting drive leads thence to Exeter.

It takes one through changing scenery: The country seems to have grown tired of its quiescent mood of the previous day's run and begins to break up into steeper hills and deepening valleys. There are sharper contrasts between hill and dale. The road rises and falls in quick succession as it flings itself out over the broken country. Now dropping down between the hills, now climbing sharp gradients, it always shows varied and beautiful changes in the landscape. Once it leads along a high ridge, where the land falls away on either side: to the right, the acres roll back to the horizon like a vast, multicoloured carpet, for the poppies and the buttercups and the countless other wild flowers lend their shades of crimson and gold to clothe the landscape in a harmony of tints; to the left, the cool blue sea stretches out from the beaches a motionless expanse of water.

A breathless drop brought us into Lyme Regis. The road dashed down the hillside in a giddy descent, springing from the hilltop straight into the town below. Then, before we had time to realise the quaint streets of the tiny village, or had an opportunity of glancing through open windows into neat houses, or to



A Row of Thatched Cottages



scarcely get an idea of what the different buildings were like, we were shot up out of the place in an ascent steeper than the previous descent had been. And up the hard hill the motor toiled with ever-increasing slowness.

All the while as we ascended a glorious view unfolded itself. The steep, precipitous hills, converging to the point where the little town lies; the roof-tops and the church-spires of the quaint place itself; the shelving coast-line curving back cliff upon cliff; and, above all, the background of the sea stretching out to meet the sky, formed a nature-picture which can scarcely be equalled in beauty along the entire southern English coast.

From here we flew on to Exeter. All the way the scenes were the same: in front, the dipping highway; the undulating fields on either hand; the little villages bordering on the road; the wayside cottages, smothered in flowers; the rose-grown hedges; the rhododendrons; the wild flowers; Honiton; Axminster; open country again;—then the city of a great cathedral.

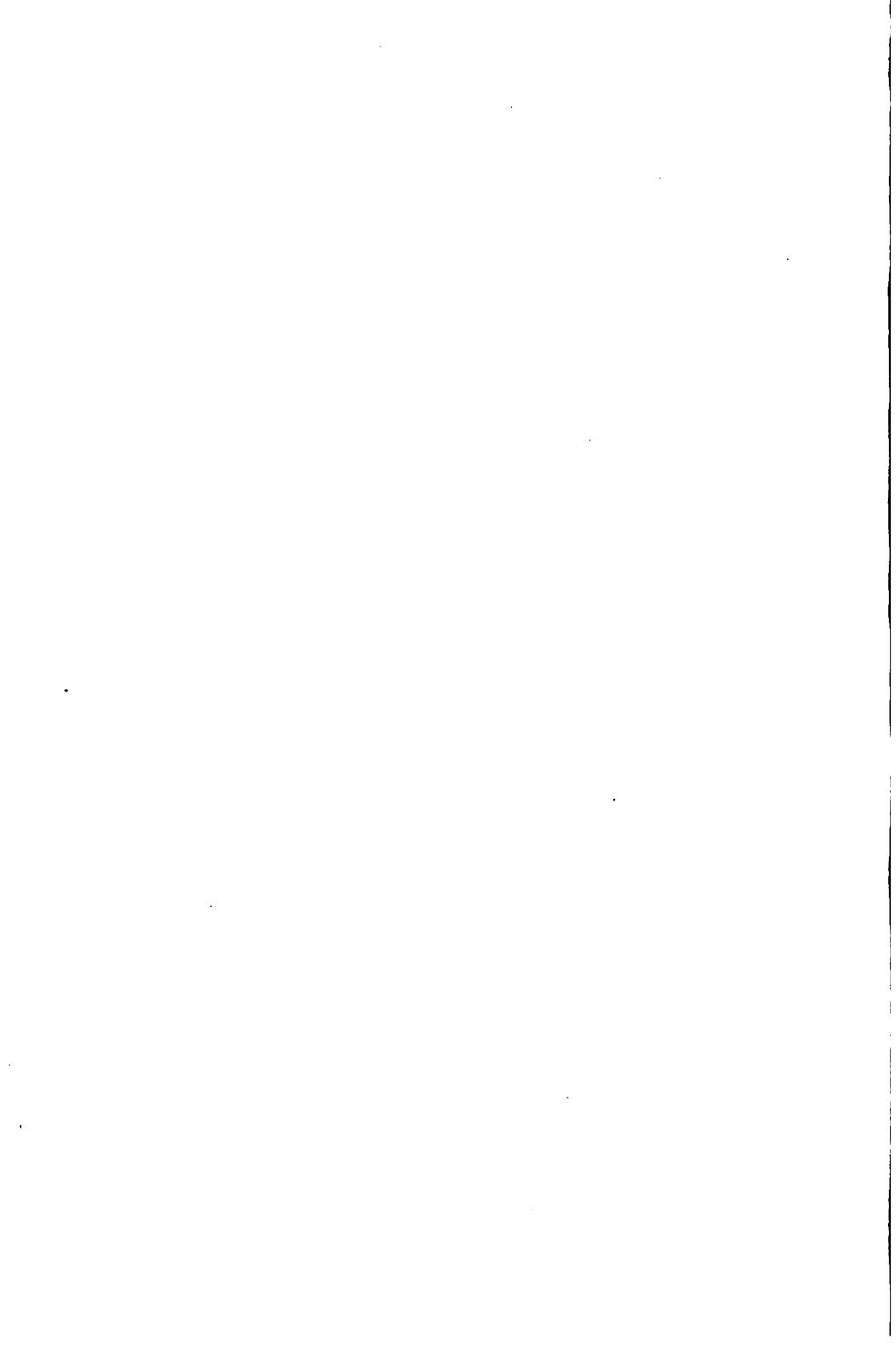
CHAPTER III

A NORTHWARD RUN TO YORK

THE Pople's New London Inn is a very charming inn at Exeter. It is a rambling old building, which lays no claim to pretension on the exterior. It stands a little drawn back from the main street in a sort of square and shows a plain, windowed front to the neighbouring houses. If, at first glance, however, its outward appearance does not tend to assure him, the visitor is certain to be agreeably surprised when the hall has been passed, the glass-covered court entered, and he finds himself in a bright rotunda. It is a sunny court filled with plants and palms, and suggests a tropical garden. Green wicker chairs—the favourite napping-places of a sleek old tabby-cat—find place beneath the palms, and large rugs cover the cobbled floor. In former times, coaches-and-four used to



An Irish Donkey



drive into this same court, rumbling in from the street with clattering of horses' hoofs and clinking of harness; and from here the horses were unharnessed and led away to the stables. The different bedrooms are filled with old-fashioned furniture; great canopies hang over each bed; huge wardrobes take the place of modern cupboards; and well-polished mirrors reflect the rooms from out age-darkened frames. The whole inn is a veritable antique-shop.

At this quaint place we stopped. After bestowing a lively interest on our immediate surroundings we asked our way to the cathedral.

In a cathedral city there always seems to be an irresistible force present which draws the visitor first to see its greatest monument. No sooner has he entered the town than a desire compels him to turn his steps cathedral-wards. It is as if the cathedral were the one and only object to be seen, as if no other building, however interesting, however famous, could rival for a moment the glorious edifice that is the house of God.

We got our first glimpse of the edifice as we came upon it from behind. Its two Norman towers shot up above the roof-tops and

pointed out where the building lay. As we drew nearer, we reached the grassy stretch of lawn that flanks it on the northern side and saw the whole stone pile spring into view.

If at first glance the structure is a trifle disappointing, if it appears flat and weighed down by the two massive towers which form the transepts, a sight of the richly-carved western front quite dispels any sensations of disappointment. In gazing at, one cannot but admire it. It is an imposing mass of carving, niched and adorned with statues, in which the changing styles of architecture—the Decorated merging into the Perpendicular—can be remarked. Stone bishops and kings, the former wearing mitres, the latter carrying swords, rise above each other in such a bewildering array that the entire front has more the appearance of a delicately fretted wood screen, than a work in stone.

As we were standing before it, examining the different figures with admiration, a black object high up in the statuary caught our eyes. It was slowly picking its way from niche to niche and twisting in and out among the figures with studied care. It paused every now and then on some projecting piece



Beautiful Killarney

of sculpture before springing in an adventurous leap to another place of safety. Then a prolonged wail sounded far above us; and we knew that the little black object was a cat.

It was too late to enter the cathedral that evening. We came back the following morning and wandered about the nave and aisles, entranced by the loveliness of the decorated Gothic.

Chief among the interesting old buildings of which Exeter boasts is "Mol's" coffee-house. It stands facing the cathedral across the green, and its odd front rises above the street in a series of bulging windows. In one room, on the second storey—built after the fashion of an old-time galleon's cabin,—Sir Walter Raleigh and Drake and many other sea-dogs were wont to congregate; and all along the top of the panelling the crests of the various celebrities are emblazoned in colours of red and blue and gold.

Leaving Exeter, we struck out for Taunton. The route was a pretty one and led through some charming scenery. Little hills rose and fell in a pleasing variety of ups and downs; sheep and lambs clothed the hillsides in

woolly flocks; colts hung their heads over gate-posts, and from the pastures gazed contentedly at the highways; small villages looked conspicuously pretty with neat thatched houses and blooming flowers; and little children with chubby, rosy faces peeped out of doorways and ran laughing about the cool lanes.

The whole countryside was "one boundless blush, one white empurpled shower of mingled blossoms." May hedges all out in pink and white bordered the road for miles. Buttercups and cornflowers and one-eyed daisies brightened the fields and showed among the grasses in patches of yellow and blue and white. Crimson roses trailed up cottage walls, overhung deep brown thatches, and screened whole dwellings in mantles of massed colour. Over garden-gates laburnums drooped in wavy yellow fringes.

We passed through Taunton on the way to Glastonbury. Later on we caught sight of a ruined church high on a surge of land, a bold mark for the surrounding country. It was so strikingly situated and commanded such a wide view of the district that we could not resist the temptation to stop the car and clamber up the steep rise to take a snap-shot.



The Ruins of Castle Desmond



At Glastonbury the "George Hotel"—the modern name of what was once "Ye Inne of Pilgrims"—is a curious old building which faces the street with Gothic carving. Formerly the guest-house of the abbey, it now, as then, offers shelter to the passing visitor. It is extremely quaint and extremely old. Upstairs King Henry VIII's and Abbot Whiting's rooms are pointed out—both ancient bed-chambers with canopied beds and massive furniture.

But the interest at Glastonbury centres neither in the quaint "George" nor in its historic bedrooms. The ruins of the abbey demand all attention. Little is now left to show how lordly the building must once have been. Fallen arches, paneless windows, ruined doorways, and ivy-covered remnants tell brokenly the whole sad story of its neglect. It is a beautiful ruin placed in a lovely setting. One does not wonder that Joseph of Arimathea chose this spot on which to found his abbey, or that, as legend says, King Arthur loved it well. The place is supposed to have been the fabled Isle of Avilion, "where falls not hail, or rain or any snow" to which the dying Arthur was going to "heal him of his grievous wound."

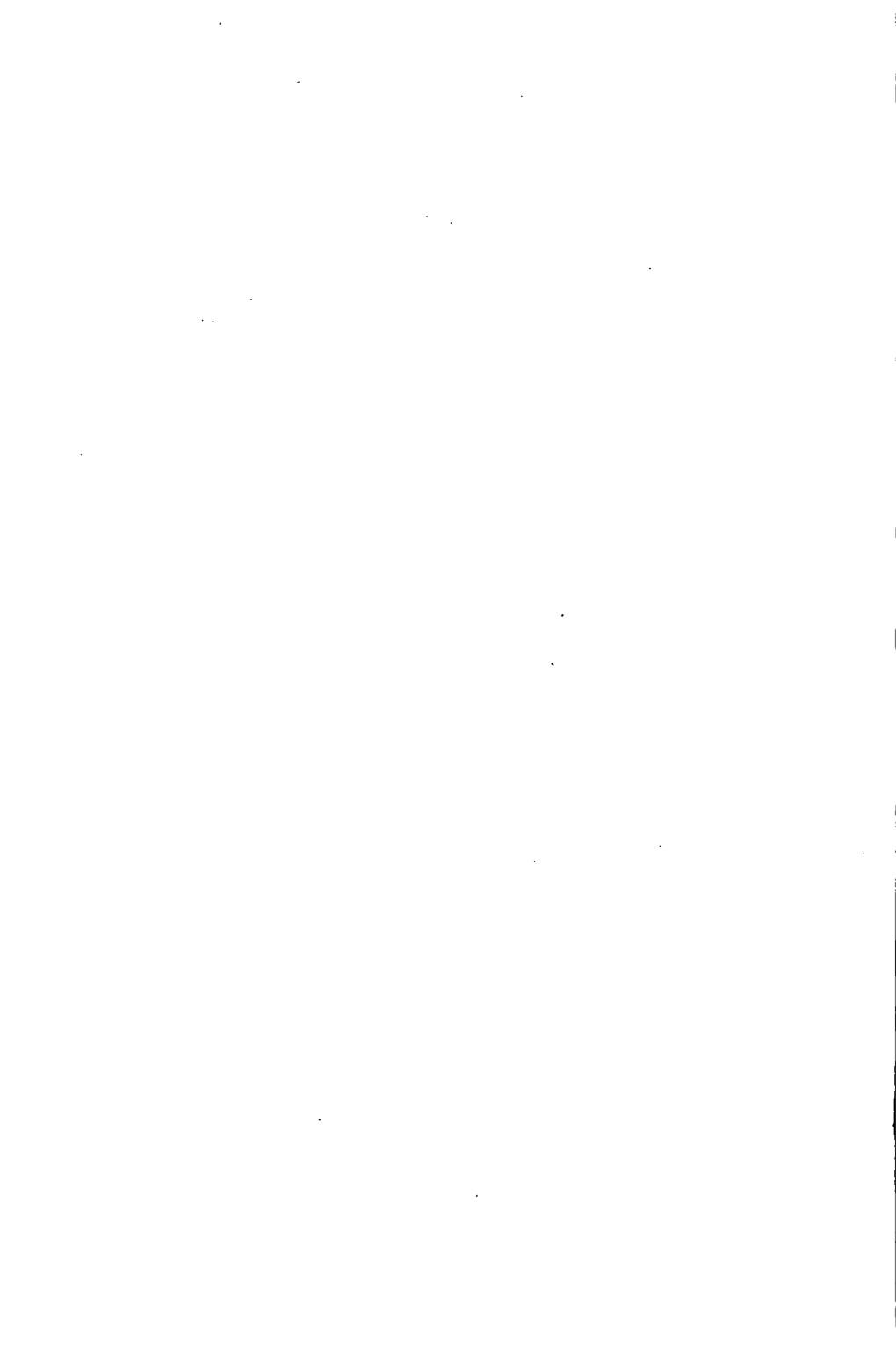
A short run brought us to Wells. Stopping a while to get a glimpse of the glorious cathedral, with its wonderful nave and choir; with its inverted arches and splendid cloisters; with its western front all carved in stone saints and kings standing in niches; with its central tower striking upward four corner-pinnacles to the sky; with its celebrated clock, which when it strikes the hours causes miniature knights to engage in bloodless combat; with its near-by bishop's palace—a baronial-looking building, surrounded by a swan-filled moat:—after viewing it all in one hasty, insufficient glance, we left the town and made for Bath.

A long climb reveals lovely vistas of the Mendip Hills as the motor ascends. The nearer slopes are bright green and cattle-covered, the farther reaches lost in whitish haze. The country has become much more undulating. Shallow valleys form themselves between the folds. More thickly-wooded patches mark the landscape, more cool woods where the trees grow in closer ranks.

In the fields cattle are always grazing. They are a characteristic feature of the English landscape. The sleek cows and the



A Roadside Snap-Shot



thick-coated sheep make pleasing pictures as they feed across the meadows. The former chew their cud, lying along the banks of meandering streams; while the latter congregate in timid flocks under wide-spreading trees or nibble among the wild flowers in the open.

Farmhouses nestle between the slopes. They raise low walls from among the foliage and have for roofs straw thatches that stand out beyond and overhang the windows like great eyebrows. A chimney-stack or two lift themselves above this mass of brown and give whatever appearance of height there is to the humble dwellings. In summer they are lost in a mantle of roses; a sea of red, or yellow, or pink covers them. The windows are screened by flowers which trail in long festoons up to the very eaves, and the eaves themselves look scarcely strong enough to bear the weight of their fragrant burdens.

One never grows tired of seeing such pretty homesteads. Each has in it some characteristic quite its own. Whether it be the odd angle of a projecting thatch, or a low doorway giving on to a bright garden, or a broad window-ledge which is the resting-place of

many pots, one is sure to find in them commonplace features that have their artistic points.

Bath's abbey closed its doors on us: we were too late to enter: the clock had already struck five. So, disappointed, we left Beau Nash's town to journey on to Bristol, trying to forget our sorrow in gazing at the lovely landscape.

From Bristol to Birmingham was a day's run. The road led through flatter country. There were none of the rounded downs of Sussex, nor the sharp, steep hills of Devon. Instead, the fields swept away from the highway in straight lines, stretching far back to lose themselves at length in rising country. Set in the midst of these acres, stately country-seats showed now and then—imposing mansions which added not a little to the interest of the surroundings.

At Tewkesbury, quite unexpectedly, the abbey church of St. Mary looms up in front. It is a handsome building and rises from among tall trees. It, too, as most of the country churches, has its shady graveyard. The Norman tower strikes boldly up into the



Bettws-y-Coed : The "Royal Oak" Hotel



sky, while the nave reaches from the tower westward to where it terminates in a huge norman arch.

The town itself is a historic place. In 1471, it was the scene of a battle between Edward IV and Margaret d'Anjou, in which the Queen, with her son, was taken prisoner. Through this conflict the English crown passed into the hands of the victorious king. As we drove through the streets, we noticed many old lath and plaster buildings, with irregular windows and pointed gables; and curious iron knockers took the place of bells.

An interesting drive brought us to Worcester. We passed many labourers on the road, who were weary tramping to the nearest farm to assist in the pea-picking; and overtook loaded waggons drawn by willing horses and unattended by sleeping drivers; slipping through wayside hamlets where only an occasional cock-crow or the bark of a watchful dog broke the stillness; and finally brought to a standstill when the beauties of the cathedral thrust themselves upon us. We spent a generous half-hour in the magnificent interior, admiring the "long-drawn aisles and fretted vaults," its choir, its

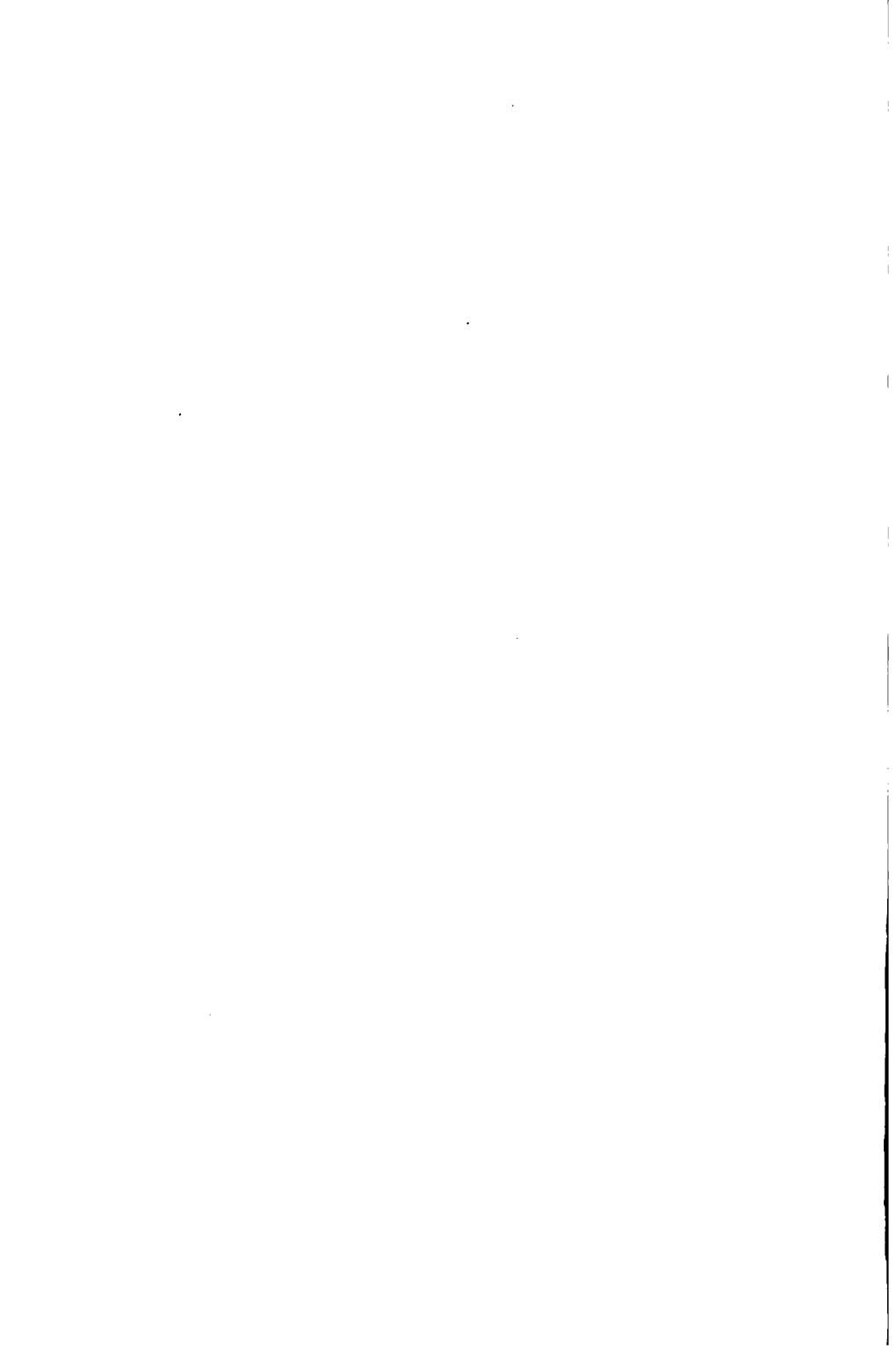
splendid altar and glowing windows. In the Jesus Chapel, an exquisitely-carved wood screen hangs above the altar. The intricacy of the various designs and the poise and expression of the several figures have been exceptionally well executed.

The town is a quaint old place. Like many another cathedral seat, its streets are narrow and crooked, and the houses that line them, odd and interesting. Its whole appearance suggests an atmosphere of quiet forgetfulness rather than an air of modern bustle and noise. Like Canterbury, like Exeter, like all cathedral cities it takes a just pride in its principal edifice and seems content to rest tranquilly under the far-flung shadows of the great church. It has played its part in history, too. Among other events which have taken place in or near it, the battle in which Cromwell defeated the Royalists, in 1651, is the most noteworthy.

We lunched at Bromsgrove at the "Golden Cross," a tiny inn of bygone years. The town was all agog! A wedding was in progress. People, both old and young, were peering from the windows and lining the streets, their faces full of expectancy for the



On the Border-Land of England and Wales



departure of the bridal party. When at length the guests left the church, when the narrow streets were unwontedly crowded with motors and carriages, the excitement which prevailed among the onlookers grew intense. The faces of the women wreathed in smiles; the hats of the men were doffed as the bride drove by; and the children's hands grasped handkerchiefs, which they waved frantically in a hearty farewell.

We visited an ancient house, in which old furniture and a built-in fireplace proved most interesting to look at. The latter was celebrated. The owner told us with pride that many great artists had begged her permission to paint it as a background for some of their pictures. The same family had been in possession of the house for over one hundred and seventy years.

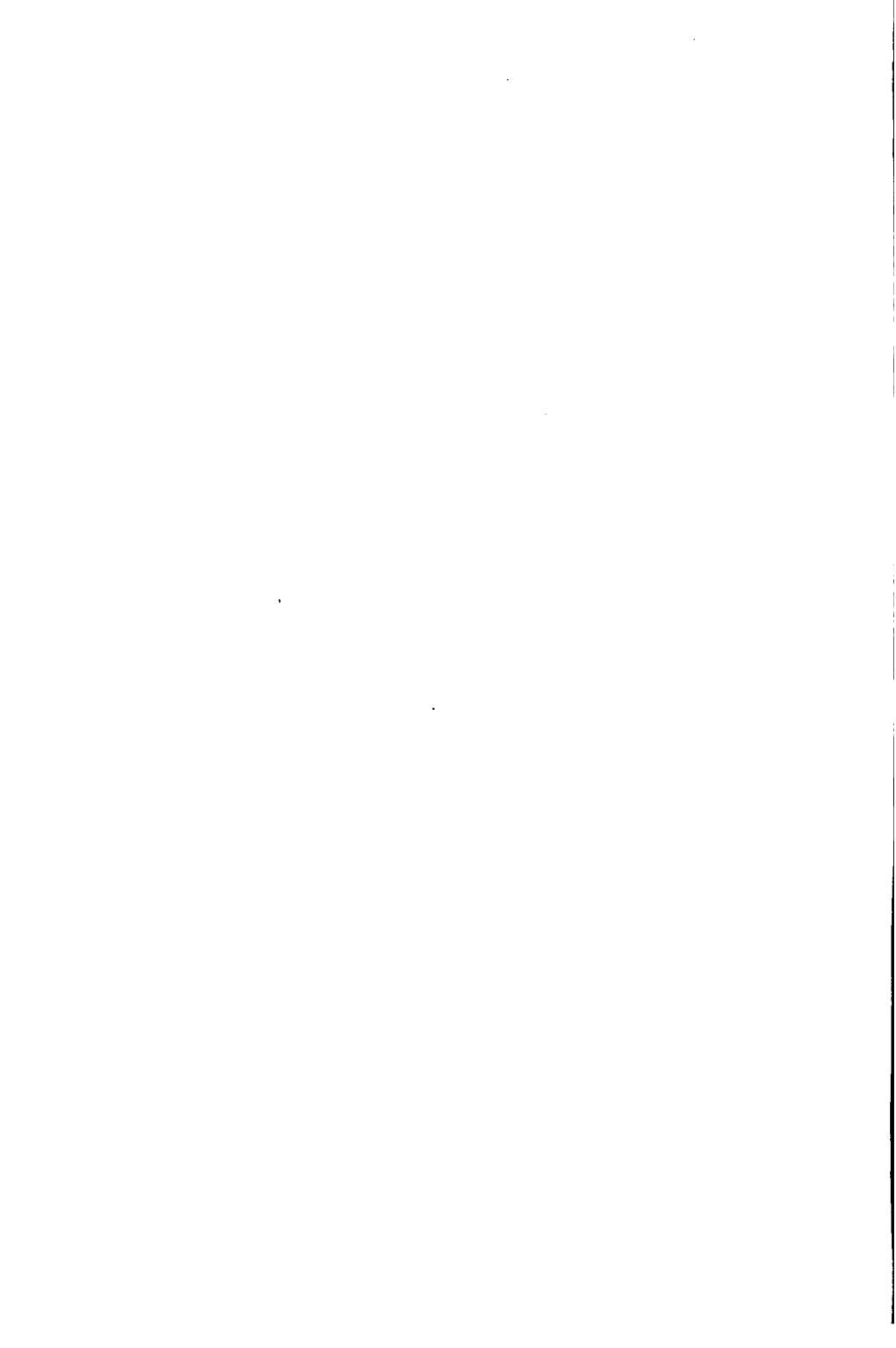
Even at Bromsgrove the smoke from Birmingham, a few miles distant, fogged the atmosphere. The remainder of the drive was through a hazy district. Although the sun was endeavouring to shine, the farther fields were blurred, and the cattle that browsed in the more distant pastures scarcely visible at all. The run was unpleasant, notwithstanding

the many beautiful estates which bordered the road for miles outside of the great manufacturing city. We had no regrets when we left Birmingham. The poverty to be seen was depressing, and the atmosphere, charged with the smoke which never ceases to be poured forth from the surrounding factory chimneys, hung thick and heavy. A short stay made us appreciate all the more the sweet, healthy air of the country and long again for the hedge-bordered roads and the unpretentious villages of the open. Litchfield, only a few miles farther on, urged us to waste no time at Birmingham, but to rather spend a few extra hours in its cathedral.

As we neared the town the object of our visit could be plainly seen, shooting its three red spires into the pale blue sky. After we had threaded our way through crooked streets and had emerged on to a little square in front, the whole glory of the edifice burst upon us. Row upon row of niched figures met our eyes. Tier upon tier they rose up, decorating the entire western front in a marvellously elaborate stone mantle, until finally they burst into the two tall spires which shoot so taperingly upward. Between these two we could



Whittington: A Picturesque Ruin



see rising another spire much higher, from the juncture of the nave and transepts.

Then, when we had passed under the splendid portals and had entered, a very dim interior revealed itself. The whole building seemed pervaded by a soft gloom. The shadowy nave receded in long-drawn pillared lines toward the altar; behind this, rich windows let in that dim, religious light that Milton tells one of, in varying shades of red and violet and blue and gold and deeper purple; while far above the vaulted roof seemed to be lost in a semi-twilight.

In the Lady Chapel is preserved a very ancient work of art, the Bible of St. Chad, the pages of which are illumined and patterned with geometric designs of bewildering intricacy. The chapter-house is very interesting. In the centre of the room, a solitary stone pillar shoots from the floor and breaks out into numerous groined arches, symbolic of a tree spreading forth its branches.

The pretty, narrow, grass-fringed Trent—more canal than river—joins one soon after one has left Samuel Johnson's birthplace, and keeps one company through Burton-on-Trent. Later on, beyond the town, stream and

highway flow in different directions; the former strikes off to the right, while the latter continues a straight course forward.

At Derby there was little to compel a stop. We got a hasty glimpse of the place as we slipped through and left it by its back streets —its back door, one might say. From here, the road followed another river—the Derwent —through a more picturesque district. The topography of the country had changed. The slopes were steeper, the fields less flat. They ran down to meet the water in quicker fall than did the undulating reaches nearer Birmingham. The road was now no longer a straight line in front. No longer did it run between banks of flowering hedges, where the scent of roses and of honeysuckle made the air fragrant, but curved around the foot of the hills, thrusting its way forward, hemmed in by dark stone fences. Sometimes it went quite close beside the Derwent and gave glimpses of the hurrying river as it dashed and splashed over its rocky bed; and sometimes farther back revealed wider views of slanting fields.

As Matlock Bath was neared the country increased in beauty. Bold rocks struck up



A Street in Shrewsbury



from the soil and gave a northern aspect to the landscape. The climax of the drive was reached when the road brought us to the little town of Matlock. The situation of the place is splendid. It lies in a rocky gorge, through which the Derwent rushes furiously. The houses rise up above each other tier upon tier as they struggle for footing on the sharp hill-side; and high above all, topping a wooded spur of rock, a bold castle shows frowning walls above the tree tops.

After Matlock is left the country widens. The ground breaks away from the river's edge in long swells. The fields are again wide and open. The farmhouses stand unsheltered in their midst.

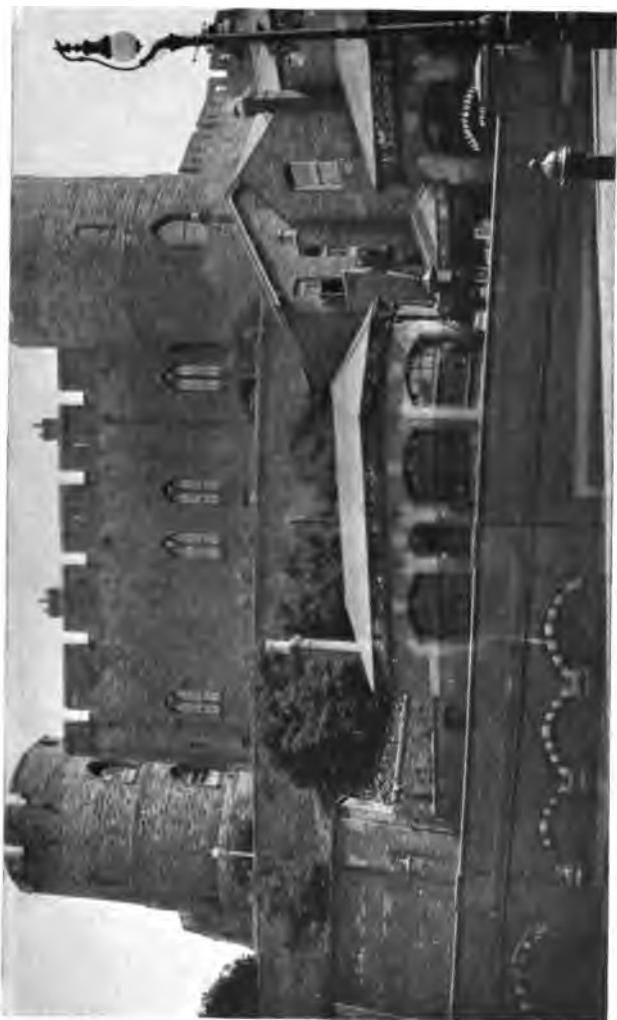
There are many beautiful country-seats in this Peak district. Every now and then as one speeds over the smooth, white roads glimpses of stately mansions surrounded by park-like lands are disclosed. They make delightful pictures, with their ivy-grown walls, many windows, and, here and there, a soaring turret.

Among the most interesting is Haddon Hall. It stands picturesquely situated on a hillock close to the river Wye, and rises up in

a series of long, irregular walls. Small, leaded windows pierce the thickness of the stone work, and stone chimneys peep above a mass of foliage. From the road, however, nothing can be seen of its terraced rose-garden or of the stone-flagged court, and in order to become acquainted with what was once the home of the celebrated Dorothy of Haddon, an interior visit to this most interesting of baronial dwellings is necessary.

We had arrived too late that afternoon to enter. A very small boy with a very important air told us that the place had closed for the day and that if we wished to go through the Hall we would have to return in the morning. We had nothing to do but to accept his decision, so we drove on to Bakewell, determined to return the next day.

Bakewell is an ideal country village. It is situated on a slope which gradually descends to the river Wye. Its streets go in all directions and terminate anywhere—all running into one another in an informal irregularity. Some empty themselves into the little square in the centre of the village; others lose themselves in the fields just beyond the outmost houses; and one—the main road—crosses the



Shrewsbury: The Castle

Wye over an ancient arched bridge. The river winds its way through the place in lazy current, washing about the bridge's bases and reflecting five deep arches in its tranquil surface. Once or twice its flow is broken by tiny dams, over which the water falls with a cool, clear sound as it ripples away in slow-moving eddies.

An ancient church which overlooks the village raises an octagonal spire upwards, from which the quarter hours are tolled in ringing tones. It was formerly the burying place of the Vernons of Haddon, and among the most interesting of the family monuments in it is that of Dorothy Vernon and her husband.

In the morning, we returned to Haddon Hall, and went through the different rooms—the chapel in which are still preserved many of the old wooden stalls, the dingy kitchen, where it was difficult to grope a way through the darkness, the spacious ball-room whose deep bay-windows overlook the garden; and then passed through the famous door and down the terrace steps, listening to the romantic story of the flight of Dorothy on the night of her sister's wedding, from the lips of an interested guide. After we had seen it all,

we drove on to Chatsworth. We hoped to get through that interesting building, but the "Palace of the Peak" was closed, and we had to content ourselves with a distant view of the imposing mansion from across the park.

Soon after Baslow—another quaint town in the centre of the Peak district—the country changes in character. Brown, rolling hills take the place of sunny meadows; instead of blooming hedgerows, stone fences divide the fields; and several lonely villages look cold and inhospitable as compared to those of the South. However, this change of scene does not last long, and after Sheffield—all smoke and dust and noise—is hurried through, the country again resumes its former aspect.

At Doncaster we lunched at the Angel Inn—an inn which, when we were there, should have laid no claim to such an assuring title—and strolled about the streets, taking a peep at its gargoyleed church before striking out by way of Selby Abbey for York.

The afternoon's run was delightful. A beautiful country unfolded itself as we progressed deeper and deeper into it. It opened before us in a series of delightful pictures. Always there were wide-spread acres and



Coventry: One of the Three Spires

shady thickets, blossoming hedges and green meadows. The fields swept away from the roadside in level reaches, dotted with cattle and homesteads; and every now and then a stately house sprang into view. And these mansions, which were so distant and so secluded, so haughtily withdrawn into the shelter of their park lands, contrasted markedly with the humble little cottages that grouped themselves in unpretentious clusters along the highway.

We found Selby Abbey lying in the heart of its quiet town. The fine old building was in the hands of the repairers, being reconstructed after a recent disastrous fire. We experienced a sense of pleasure in knowing that the building was not left a blackened ruin.

A verger gave us a vivid account of the fire as he took us about the place. He told how it had originated near the organ and had spread to the choir, devouring the roof, and how, finally, the flames had been checked just in time to save the abbey from entire destruction.

Later in the afternoon we continued on to York, and soon caught sight of the cathedral towers silhouetted against the clouds.

CHAPTER IV

ACROSS THE BORDER INTO SCOTLAND

YORK is one of the most interesting cities in England. It is so ancient and has such a stirring history that few places can hold out the same wealth of attraction to the visitor. The Romans knew York, fortified it by a wall, and made it one of their most important posts in Britain. They proclaimed Constantine Emperor there in 306 A.D. In the middle ages, too, it was the background of many a turbulent scene; and, in 1644, was besieged by Charles I. Its stout walls and feudal "bars" still tell of those days when to plunder and to attack were common occupations—pastimes almost—and when strong defences were necessary to protect the city from the assaults of hostile forces.

But York is particularly interesting on account of its minster. The splendid cathedral



A Quaint Nook in Coventry

rears itself from amidst the town, crushing into insignificance the houses which cluster about its steps. It stands in a picturesque setting: on one side lies the city, and on the other the close and deanery garden; while beyond this latter mass of tree and flower, half-girdling it in a belt of stone as if guarding it from the world beyond, the old town walls rise up.

One goes through the glorious church, marvelling at its majestic size—at the splendid sweep of the nave, the lofty height of the central tower, the spacious breadth of the transepts; held spellbound by the soft beauty of the windows and the intricate traceries of the choir-screen; stirred by the deep-toned organ throbbing melodious music.

The rain was beating hard against the wind screen and patterning in quick splashes on the leather top when we left York. The roads lay soaking. Puddles of water looked like small lakes in the middle of the highway. The ditches ran miniature rivers. The weather cleared, however, as we reached Ripon, and we viewed the cathedral there in bright sunshine.

The road led us across country, through

a more broken region, climbing over the hills in steep ascents and dropping into the valleys with sudden swiftness. At first it ran a gentle course, as if preparing us for the several climbs to come, traversing a diversified landscape on its way to Pateley Bridge. Directly it had crossed the Nidd, however, and almost before it had left the town, it scaled a sharp hillside—up which the car mounted with ever-decreasing speed. So steep was the gradient that we were forced to drop into lowest gear.

After the ascent, the aspect of the country changed quickly. Bleak brown moors took the place of sunlit acres; wild, rolling country surged from sky-line to sky-line; and no trees were anywhere to act as barriers to the northern winds. Few cattle gave life to the landscape. Those that did looked dirty and black from feeding on the open slopes. It was a very lonely country; no villages held up their roof-tops in the valleys, and no farm-houses showed sign of human habitation. Misty clouds hung low over the moors, veiling the distant reaches and tipping the highest hills in a mantle of rain-drops. There was little vegetation of any kind. All around was very still and bleak and desolate.



An English Highway

The road made its way through this cheerless district in narrow lines. It was no straight strip which showed ahead like a broad, unrolled ribbon, but a poor lane, running between dark stone dykes in many a twist and turn. Often it took us along the crests of the hills, where, once or twice, a veil of mist enveloped us as we passed; then, falling quickly between the folds, limited the view to near-by gorse-grown slopes. But later in the day, as it neared the Lake district, it ran through a changed country, for along with sights of green fields and hedge-divided pastures, we saw low ranges of distant mountains rising up to form dull violet backgrounds.

Many happily-situated hamlets were scattered throughout the countryside. They were delightfully rural little places. The chief characteristics of each were very similar: comfortable cottages straggling along the roadside in picturesque disorder; a tree-embowered church, surrounded by its cool, quiet graveyard; and a riot of colour formed by the purple rhododendrons and the scarlet geraniums.

At one of these small places the village

sports were in progress. Men in racing costume were ready to run, others waiting to perform on parallel bars, while others still prepared to vault the jumping-poles. The whole village had turned out to do honour to the sportsmen. Men, women, and children, dressed in their best, looking very spick and span, had collected in the open common, while from the neighbouring hamlets others had come to take part in the event. Carriages and carts, filled with eager country-folk and preceded by barking dogs, blocked the highways in a steady stream beyond the little village, and the dust lay thick on the hedges after they had passed by. The event must have been one of local importance for, as we sped through, the countryside seemed deserted. We came to the conclusion that all work must have been given up for the day and that everyone was enjoying himself at the sports.

From Kendal we drove down to Ulverston. Instead of following on northward into Scotland we turned south towards Morecambe Bay. About a mile and a half on the other side of the town the beautiful Conishead Priory was our headquarters for several days. The fine



Kenilworth Castle

old mansion, which was formerly the home of the Braddell family, to-day makes an ideal "hydro." It lies happily placed on the shores of Morecambe Bay, with its gardens and parklands running down to the water's edge. From here we made excursions to the different lakes.

Grasmere, Windermere, and Derwentwater are surpassingly lovely. They lie at the foot of low-rising mountains and reflect the soft green slopes in their limpid waters. They are very small; each one looks like a little gem, scarcely differing from the other in size or beauty. They form the centre of a delightful excursion district. Being quite close to each other, they are easily seen in a short time, and one can pay them all a visit in the course of a day's run. Pretty towns are situated along their shores; but of them all, Windermere and Grasmere are the most engaging.

On the day we made the tour of the lakes, we lunched at a tiny inn at Cockermouth—Wordsworth's birthplace. Afterwards, we explored the small town and were much amused at many of the quaint market scenes. In one part of the main street an auction sale was in progress. A large crowd of people—

mostly women—had gathered in a circle about an auctioneer. Near at hand, the various articles ready to go under the hammer were temptingly displayed for the benefit of the onlookers. Oilcloth flooring, furniture, clothes and minor goods lay spread out near to the sidewalk. In the centre, trying his hardest to sell his stock, shouting at the top of his voice and, at the same time, waving his hands to emphasise the importance of what he said; demanding, cajoling, pleading with the spectators to buy; his face alternately brightening and clouding under the expressions on the features of the crowd—stood the man who was most interested in the financial side of the question—the heated auctioneer.

As we moved away, one woman had bought an oilcloth mat for her kitchen, another a pair of wooden-soled shoes for her son, while a third was on the verge of purchasing some lace curtains for her best room.

We left for Edinburgh in a downpour of rain. The rain pelted furiously all day long. Never once a ray of sunshine pierced the clouds to lighten up the cheerless countryside. Along the route, the farther fields lay half-obscured in mist, the higher ones quite lost in



Anne Hathaway's Cottage

an obliterating fog. The whole landscape was but an indistinct blur, in which the meadows and the trees, the bushes and the hedges could only be distinguished through a veil of rain. Often, as the car was ascending a long-drawn hill, where on one side the land fell away quickly from the road, nothing could be seen of the valley below, so completely was it filled with vapour.

Penrith did not hold out any charms. Perhaps had the day been fine the town would have appeared more attractive. As it was, nothing could tempt us from the comfortable car. No beautiful church, no interesting building persuaded us to brave the elements in sightseeing. So we did not stop, pressing on as far as possible to the border. At Carlisle we lunched, but it was too wet to see the castle in which Mary of Scots was held prisoner in 1568, or to take much interest in the city's history, although we knew it to be a stirring one ever since the time when the Romans made Carlisle one of their chief military posts, until the year 1745, when the city was last besieged by the Jacobites. So paying it but scant attention, we again continued on our way to Edinburgh.

On and on we went through pelting, pouring rain that beat against the wind-screen in vicious spite; on and on past mist-covered fields where poor, drenched cattle lay, past dripping chickens that searched in vain for some dry spot of shelter; on and on through little towns which showed closed doors and windows to the driving rain; past bedraggled people tramping their way from place to place, some huddling under the shelter of an umbrella, others, less fortunate, allowing the rain-drops the right of way to travel from crown to toe; on and on through Hawick, Selkirk, Galashiels until at last we came to Scotland's capital.



A Water-Way in Rotterdam



CHAPTER V

THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

EDINBURGH has been called the modern Athens. Its classical appearance at once strikes the eye and satisfies it as to the appropriateness of the appellation. Carlton Hill, with its national monument built in the Grecian style of architecture, suggests the temple-crowned acropolis of the ancient city, and the resemblance between the two capitals is further emphasised by the many columned and porticoed buildings which are to be found scattered throughout the different portions of the metropolis.

Mingled with the stately precision of the Grecian, there is the contrasting irregularity of the mediæval style. The ancient castle strikes the latter note. Crowning the rugged rock which rises abruptly from the velvet lawns of Princes Street Gardens, and outlining

itself in a confusion of stern battlements against the sky, the weather-beaten fortress stands as a contrast to the monuments on the neighbouring hills.

Edinburgh offers so many interest-spots that one is a little bewildered by its very prodigality. In every street one comes suddenly upon old buildings which link one's thoughts to the past. Each has played its little part in the history of the city, and each is ready to tell its story if one be only willing to listen.

Holyrood Palace, which stands in the protecting shadow of Arthur's Seat, and which raises grey walls and rounded towers against the sombre background of the hill, is one of the most fascinating of them all, for within its royal rooms many scenes both tragic and gay have taken place in varying succession, and many lives have been passed to an accompaniment of either laughter or of tears.

In opposition to the dignity of the imposing palace, the quaint dormered house in which John Knox lived interests one in quite a different manner. One explores the queer little building with an excited curiosity. Entering low-ceiled rooms to see where the great



A Dutch Road

preacher lived, climbing the dark spiral staircase up which he used to walk, and looking out the window through which he delivered his eloquent sermons, one goes through the irregular building with a deepened appreciation for the great reformer.

The Canongate, too, is crowded with interest. It is a long, steep street, connecting the castle with Holyrood. Although not now, as once, the aristocratic thoroughfare of the city, it still shows one the dilapidated houses which were the semi-palaces of a former generation.

We made a run out to Abbotsford, the home of Sir Walter Scott. During the drive there the road brought us into the typically Scotch town of Peebles and later led through the valley of the Tweed. It was a delightful trip. The highway skirted quite close to the water, curving as the river wound its way across the country, and allowed us exquisite views of the shallow dale and the rising hills. Many anglers were fishing in the middle stream, their lines swung out into the current. They wore great rubber boots drawn up to their thighs. But most of them looked dis-

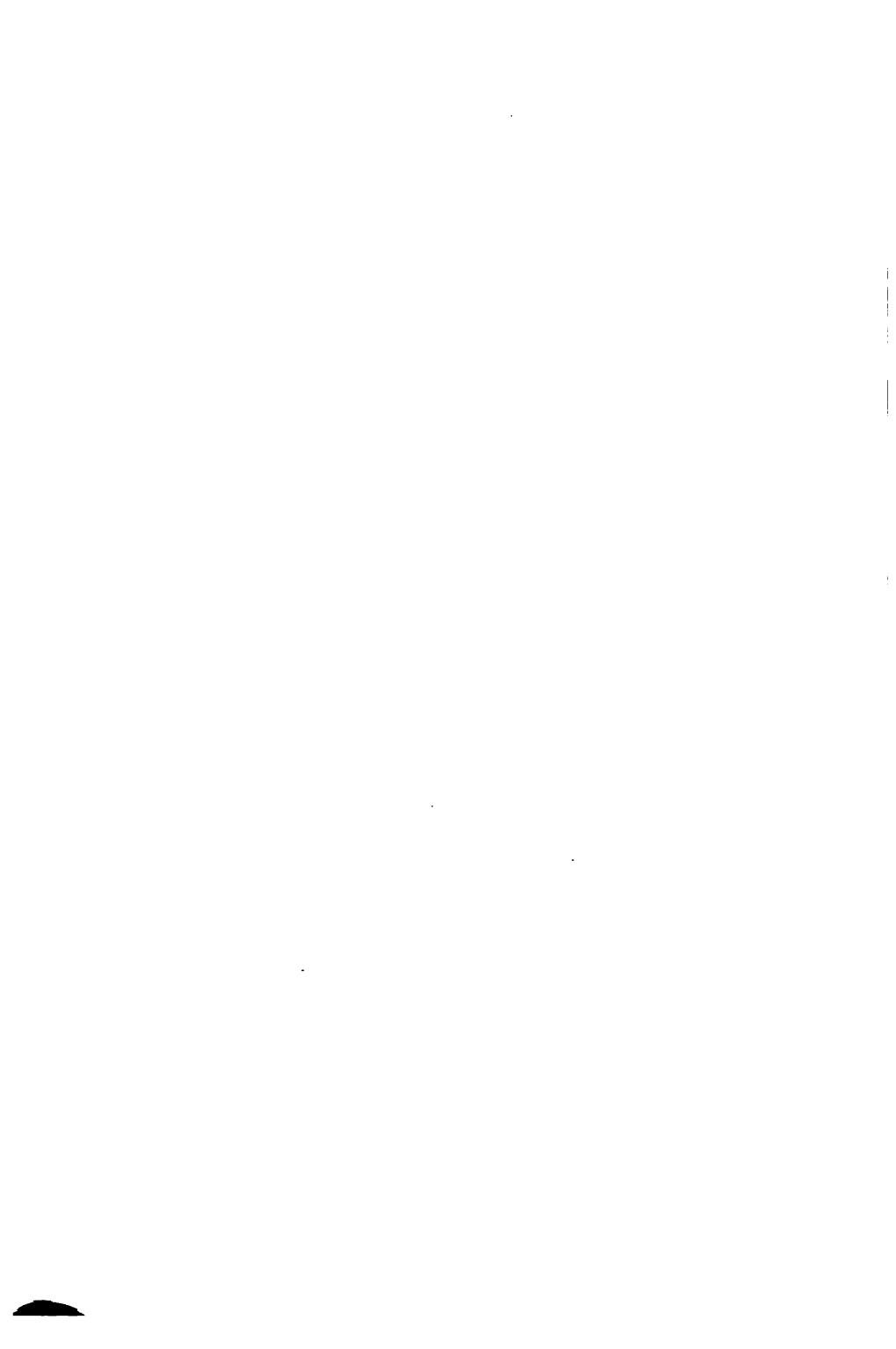
consolate, for their empty baskets betrayed the fact that sport was poor.

The very name of Abbotsford conjures up recollections of Sir Walter Scott. Thoughts of his life and of his works rush into the mind at its mention. While being conducted through the various rooms which are particularly interesting on account of their close association with the intimate life of the author of *Waverley*, one begins to realise what an effect these very apartments had on Sir Walter and on his books. The entrance-hall, with its fine mantelpiece, its ancient armour, and its various old-time weapons; the study in which were written many of the most famous of the *Waverley* novels; the library, lined from floor to ceiling with well-stocked bookcases; the drawing-room, where Raeburn's portrait of the poet hangs over the mantelpiece; the armory, whose walls are covered with old-fashioned weapons and fighting relics of all kinds—each of these rooms tells one very plainly how much of an antiquary the builder of Abbotsford was.

Afterwards we continued to Melrose and saw the abbey there. It is a splendid ruin. Unlike the fragments at Glastonbury, much



An Old Clock-Tower in Amsterdam



remains to tell of its former greatness. Although the central tower no longer soars proudly above the nave, nor do the windows still frame richly-coloured glass, yet one can almost picture the abbey in its entirety, while viewing it from across the weedy graveyard. The two most interesting objects in it provoke widely differing emotions: the one represents the sacred, the other the grotesque. The first is the spot where the heart of Bruce lies buried; the second, a curious gargoyle which projects from the nave—a pig playing the bagpipes.

We left Edinburgh a few days later on our journey northward. We had seen the interest-spots surrounding the Scottish capital, and the Highlands were urging us on. Before we reached there, however, several historic old towns on the route claimed us. Among the most famed was Stirling.

All the way the countryside is steeped in history. Every inch of the ground tells its special story. Almost each small town has been the scene of a stirring conflict. Just on the outskirts of the village of Kirkliston, the English army, under Edward I, in 1298, encamped before fighting the battle of Fal-

kirk. Linlithgow is renowned for its connection with the sovereigns of Scotland, since it was there that James IV spent a great part of his leisure hours and there also that Queen Mary was born. Bannockburn lies on the route and outrivals them all in fame.

But it is only when this latter place has been run through and Stirling reached, when the steep narrow streets of that town have been ascended and the castle entered, it is only then that one becomes fully awake to the wealth of interest which surrounds one. The castle itself is the climax. A gloomy old building, perched on a rocky surge of land, it proudly overlooks the surrounding country from its high position. In it have been enacted many of the deeds relating closely with Scottish history. Here Alexander I died; here Mary, Queen of Scots was crowned; and in one small room in the most ancient part of the building, James II murdered the Earl of Douglas. From a spot on the battlements called the "Queens' Outlook"—where Mary of Scots used to watch the games played on the turf far below her, and where, centuries later, Victoria admired the fertile stretch known as the Carse



A Dutch Windmill



of Stirling—a magnificent view of the outlying country breaks upon the sight.

Below the walls, the plain runs out to meet the curving Forth in flat green stretches, and through the fields the river winds its way in far-flung loops. Beyond, the little town—the Bridge of Allan—climbs gently up the lower slopes; while in the distance the Ochil Hills roll back until they break at last into the purple peaks of numerous “Bens.”

It is a glorious panorama that one sees. The different colourings of the grass, of the hills and of the far stretching valley go to make up a nature picture which has few rivals in Scotland. Especially is it lovely when seen on a fitful day, when long processions of cold grey clouds drift across the sky from the bleaker regions of the north, and when the sun breaks through them for a moment to warm into deeper tones the emerald grass and the sparkling river.

Stirling is a very ancient place. Its streets are narrow and steep, running up to the castle through lines of odd-looking houses. In the lower part of the town, where the horse-cars—a glaring modernity introduced for the speedy conveyance of those who would move

quickly with the times—creep along the pavements, the buildings are of handsome stone, and line the roadways in substantial stories.

We made our way out of this old-world town by crossing a bridge and entering Allan. There are two bridges, but we did not go by the older of the two, since it is no longer used for traffic. It remains only an historical monument to recall the bloody events which occurred on or near to it. After passing through the town and again reaching open country, we came quite close to the Wallace Monument, a towering mass of stone erected to the memory of one of Scotland's greatest heroes, which caps a hillock and forms a conspicuous landmark in the surrounding countryside.

We stopped at Perth for the night and left the "Fair Maid's" city early the next morning. Inverness was the destination of the day's run, and before reaching there we had exchanged the Lowlands for the Highlands.

During the early part of the drive, the change in the character of the landscape is not noticeable. The road leads through the Valley of the Tay and follows the river for long stretches at a time. Sometimes running quite



A Street in Monnikendam

close to the water, with the noise of its splash breaking the stillness, and now higher up, where banks of trees shut out the valley by a screen of green, it takes one through a country where the softer elements of the south are combined with the sterner features of the north. In the nearer foregrounds occasional cottages show white on the hillsides as a bright sun slants over them; and these, in some respects, are reminders of the southern English dwellings, in that they, too, have gardens bright with seasonable flowers. But in the distance the low-lying hills which rise up to form the valley's end, warn one that beyond them lie the moors and bleaker country.

Shortly after Blair Atholl we came upon a military camp. Hundreds of conical tents dotted the camping-ground. Around them officers and men were working. It was a cavalry camp, for many horses were picketed in long lines across the fields; and bunches of hay and a pail of water stood at the forefeet of each. Several Highland pipers were making sweet—or discordant—music on the bagpipes, their cheeks puffed out almost to bursting-point by reason of much blowing.

We lunched at Kingussie and again set out

through lonely country, where the ground was brown with last year's heather, and where the summits of the higher mountains were touched with snow. It was an inhospitable landscape. Cold, rugged hills rose up in stern array; furious leaping torrents dashed down the valleys; tall, straight pines moaned as the wind sougued through them; forlorn shorn sheep shivered on the hillsides; and always the road progressed northward, taking us into a bleaker and barer district. The hills had lost their verdant freshness and had taken on a carpet of dull, brown gorse. As yet, neither the yellow of that plant nor the purple of the heather gave colour to the slopes, and the whole landscape was painted in monotone. The only living objects to be seen were the sheep and lambs which fed all day in the open, along the roadside; and these, as the motor whirled by, scampered off in frightened hurries, the lambs skipping about like large rabbits.

After a splendid run we arrived at Inverness late in the afternoon. It was our stopping-place over the Sunday. We had decided to go no farther northward.

Inverness has a charm of its own. The



Two Typical Volendamers

charm lies in the situation. It is beautifully placed on the shores of the Firth of Inverness and, in the season, is a busy place all agog with the comings and goings of tourists. When we were there it was comparatively quiet: August and September are the fashionable months, not June. During our stay, the town did not show itself to advantage; the streets were wet and slippery with rain, and scarcely a person was out to give sign of life to the place. As we left the next Monday morning, we got a glimpse of the imposing castle which guards the river, and, from the bridge, had a view of the town itself, extending out on either bank.

Soon after leaving, we joined in with the Caledonian Canal, and during the greater part of the day, skirted close to the water. We wound a curving way down past Durnnadarochit, over a dangerous road which was all twists and turns, branching off from the main road at a small town called Invermoriston to pursue a less frequented route which led through the beautiful Glen Moriston. We had been advised to make this slight detour instead of following the canal for the entire distance to Fort William. We were glad that

we had done so, for the drive was one of exceptional beauty. At Laggan Locks the road deserted the right hand bank of the canal and crossed over to the left. The waters of Loch Ness had lost themselves in the canal to meet again under a different name, when the connecting strip had merged into the broader expanse of Loch Lochy.

At Fort William we had intended to take the boat to Oban. During the latter part of the run we had hastened in order to be in time for its departure. A thousand woes! the steamer had already left when we arrived. We could see it steaming swiftly down the lake, leaving behind it a long, brown trail of smoke. There was nothing to be done but to try to beat it to the next landing-place. So, consigning Fort William to the care of frowning Ben Nevis, we raced away over a narrow road in a mad haste to reach Onich before the boat. An exciting race ensued. A small, black speck on the water far ahead showed us our object; and since the road was not wide enough for speeding, we despaired of ever overtaking it. Gradually, however, we lessened the intervening distance; the black speck grew larger; more of its outline came into



A Marken Group

view; people could be seen on deck; and passing it, we arrived just in time to drive on to the wharf in readiness for embarking.

Oban is a beautiful town. It is ranged along the shores of a well-protected bay. The houses cling to the hillsides, showing white against a densely-wooded background. Two noticeable features catch the eye: one, the old ivy-covered ruin of Castle Dunollie; the other, an unfinished amphitheatre-like structure which reminds one of the Coliseum at Rome.

As the steamer slipped in, the harbour was lively with boats of all descriptions. There were pickets and battleships, tenders and steamers, impudent hired rowboats and dignified private steam-yachts. The place was unusually gay, for the fleet was anchored just beyond the narrow channel entrance, and the sailors from the ships had come ashore, and were enjoying themselves on land.

We left Oban, with Glasgow the object of the day's run. Before we had reached that busy manufacturing city we had passed through some of Scotland's finest scenery. Not only had our route taken us along the shores of Loch Etive and through the gloomy Pass of Brander to Loch Awe, but in the

afternoon had led us an exquisite drive down Loch Lomond to Balloch. It had been a varied trip. We had seen wild glens and wooded thickets, narrow valleys and rushing torrents. We had wound along the shores of placid lochs where the water rippled noiselessly over the pebbles to the roadway, and where, here and there, an ivy-covered ruin rose from an island in the lakes. And once or twice, mounting into lonely passes, through which streams dashed in rude haste, we had been brought close to the Highland cattle, which fed on the hills in shaggy herds. Later in the day, as Dumbarton was neared, we traversed a countryside which had exchanged Highland grandeur for Lowland peacefulness. Whitewashed cottages took the place of peasant dwellings; cultivated acres met the eye; and instead of a narrow road that curved over the hills, a straighter highway led on through a more prosperous district. Many beautiful estates lay outside Dumbarton. They bordered on each other in quick succession. One could scarcely see more than the roofs of these mansions, however, so well were they screened from the public gaze. We arrived at Glasgow late in the afternoon.



An Old-Time Gateway

CHAPTER VI

IRELAND

A DELUGE of rain and mist welcomed us to Ireland. Our first glimpse of the "Emerald Isle" was caught from behind a downpour. We had seen the weather-beaten coast shooting its jagged points of land out into the water; had passed close to the shore and heard the sullen sea surging into the shallow bays and breaking harshly upon the beaches; and had discerned the Giant's Causeway, the Giant's Organ, and his Chimney, as the boat glided by. But all these views had been marred by a damp fog which swept across sea and country in great grey puffs.

Port Rush offered us no better weather. It presented a half-drowned appearance; its streets ran in mud, its roof-eaves dripped water, and the sidewalks lay soaking in great puddles. The little town claimed us for the

afternoon. We had, it is true, started out to see the Causeway, but when already well on our way there, we decided to return. Perhaps in the morning, we thought, the weather might change; and it would be preferable to see the most celebrated of Ireland's interest-spots with bright, blue sky above, and warm sunlight streaming gratefully across the country. So a hurried, splashing run had brought us to the town again, and we had left the car to go from shop to shop and see what interest each contained.

But our postponed Causeway visit was in vain. We awoke the next day to the same lowering sky, the same cold weather, the same damp fog. However, we were not discouraged. Any one who goes to Ireland expects to find rain. We were no exceptions to the rule. So when we set out from the cheerful Northern Counties Hotel we tried to think as little of the elements as possible, congratulating ourselves that they were no worse.

The road followed the coast. On one side lay the undulating water; on the other, the undulating land. The broad expanse stretched out to the misty horizon veiled here and there where a puff of fog drifted slowly



The Rhine: Vine-Covered Hillsides

over it, near to the surface. It splashed along the rocky shore, booming against the rocks with a sound of distant thunder and scattering spray across the lowest weeds that grew in the crevices between the stones. There was little wind and the sea not rough, but a steady swell rolled inward a long procession of waves.

The land, in places, was fogged too. The sun had not as yet come out to scatter the straying mists, and the fields only half showed themselves between torn, veil-like shreds. The grass was vividly green, as were the trees and bushes, and the whole landscape seemed painted in the same bright emerald shade. The meadows were deserted, no cattle, no donkeys, no men were to be seen, and the countryside was given up to the rains and mists which seemed forever to be clinging to the coast, as if unwilling to leave it.

The road was muddy. Except for this, its surface was fairly good and wide. It wound its way above the water, now running close to the cliff where we could look over and see the rocky shore below, now slightly back, where a bright green strip separated us from the sea. It passed by the ruins of Castle Dunluce—a gaunt ruin crouching on a rock overhanging

the water, inhabited now only by the gulls which scream about its fallen walls—and then turned to the left, after having dived through the small village of Bushmills on our way to the Causeway.

Any one who visits this marvel of nature should take a boat and view it from the water. It is not enough to walk by land and see the special interest-spots afoot. A really good idea of the Causeway cannot be got unless viewed from a boat. And so, arriving at the hotel, we left the motor and engaged a guide to row us about from place to place. A steep descent over a rocky path brought us to the water, and in the shelter of two handy rocks we saw a rowboat awaiting us. From the shore, the sea seemed to be surging inward in huge, rolling waves; but the men said that the water was calm, that they could not wish for a better sea, and we all jumped into the pitching boat. They rowed us to the cave first. We approached it cautiously, for in spite of the "calm" sea, the rowers realised that any one of the waves could take up the boat and toss it to atoms against the rocks, should we go too near. We glided into the cavern, and heard the booming of a thousand cannon



A Rhenish Castle



as the breakers, swirling in, dashed in splintering spray against the walls and roof. This latter was very beautiful: many vari-coloured rocks tinted the surface with natural blues, greens, and reds; and the different effects of light and shade, of glistening drops, of showered spray playing upon it made a very remarkable picture.

Then, after having carefully backed out of the cave and once more on the broad surface of the sea; after rowing along the coast and seeing for a second time the Giant's different instruments—his organ, his chimneys—we were compelled to land in all haste. A driving rain came on and made us seek shelter in the tiny house near to the Causeway. The torrent lasted almost two hours. Seldom, to us, had the rain poured down in greater quantities; it seemed as if the whole heavens had been opened and another deluge was about to swamp the earth. The sea was soon completely lost to sight, and the near-by cliffs showed blurred and uncertain behind the downpour. We waited for half-an-hour, and then, seeing that there was no sign of a change, armed ourselves with the umbrellas which we had luckily brought, and commenced a long,

muddy climb back to the hotel and to the car.

In the afternoon after lunch at the inn, and when a brilliant sunshine—the first since our setting foot in Ireland—streamed across country in welcome rays, drying the roads and making the fields steam with heat, we commenced a long afternoon's run to Belfast.

The road skirts the coast for practically the entire distance. It is a most beautiful drive, and equal to any in Ireland. Always one gets changing pictures of the coast and sea. Now skirting low down where the rocks resound with the breaking of the waves; now higher up where vistas of the country inland, all bright and smiling and wet after the recent showers, break upon the eye; now sweeping in from wind-beaten promontories to sheltered bays; now exchanging rough beaches for sandy, sea-weed-strewn shores; now forsaking the fierce noise of the outer waves for the even wash of the water breaking wearily on the sand—the drive is one of constant change, of varied and equally beautiful land and sea views.

When we made this delightful trip the afternoon was radiant. It compensated for the morning by giving us splendid weather.



German Landscape



Blue sky showed overhead and reflected deeper shades into the sea, and a warm sun streamed out of a cloudless heaven, revealing all the beauties of this unrivalled coast. A salty smell of the brine, mingled with that of the moist earth, pervaded the atmosphere, and we drew in great breaths of it, filling and refilling our lungs.

After Larne, one of the busiest ports on the coast, the road forsook the water for a time and made a short cut though verdant fields and through scattered villages. Often at a lonely little cottage along the roadside, an old woman was sitting at the doorstep while her husband farther out in the fields cut the rich black earth into peat bricks. She was seldom idle, however, for if not knitting or peeling potatoes for the next frugal meal, she was feeding innumerable chickens which pecked about her feet, running up to her in twenties as she scattered handfuls of corn. She would often stop for a moment to watch the car; and when we waved would answer by a deep curtsy and a broad smile on her homely face, then go about her work as before, only a little brighter at having received an unsolicited hand-wave from the passers-by.

Her little cottage, like most such Irish dwellings, was always a very humble affair. Four whitewashed walls, with two or three uncurtained windows breaking their length, a low door unapproached by any steps, a slanting roof, often covered with moss and crowned by stunted chimneys—such was her home. And sometimes—once and again—a few flowers showed signs of taste on the part of the simple owners, and a bright geranium, strikingly scarlet against the whitewashed background of the wall, stood out a patch of brilliant colour in the green surroundings.

Belfast kept us for two days. During our visit, however, the place did not show to advantage. Unceasing rains had poured from day to day, emptying the streets of people if not of water, and bringing with them a cold, damp atmosphere that made us anxious to seek fine weather ahead.

Another interesting—though less beautiful—drive leads on to Dublin. It runs a charming course southward through some typically Irish scenery. It leaves behind the sea and takes in exchange verdant fields on either hand. The road finds its way between wild, overgrown hedges. Great masses



Berlin: The Reichstag

of the unkempt foliage hang out beyond the ditches and sweep to the ground, falling on the grasses along the road's edge. They make one compare them with and remark their total difference from the English hedges; the ones uncared for and untidy; the others so trim, so neatly clipped. Its surface is fairly good. If at times there are patches of broken glass scattered over it, or shallow ruts into which the wheels slip with nothing more than a gentle bumping, or muddy stretches beneath the trees where the sun—the always fitful sun which never seems to shine for more than a few moments—has not had time to penetrate and dry, one forgets these drawbacks by gazing at the lovely landscape. It is typically Irish. There is little in it to remind one of England, still less to carry one's thoughts back to Scotland. There is not the blooming mass of flowers which one sees in the former, neither are there the dark stone dykes to divide the fields that are found in the latter. When flowers are seen they appear less vivid, and when there are dykes they are moss-covered. In the fields men were working with hoe and rake. They tended to the carrots, the cabbages, and the

potatoes which were planted in lines across the ground. In some districts, peat digging was the general occupation. Great stacks of the black earth had been piled up, waiting for loading on to the donkey-carts. And many of these latter, drawn by willing little beasts, bumped unevenly across the fields, scattering from time to time many of the bricks which made up their load. There was always a strange incongruity between a donkey and his load—the former was miniature, the latter gigantic. Often one wondered how the poor beasts managed to drag them, for they were never assisted by their drivers in any way. And these latter—great, strapping men, large and strong enough to carry donkey, ears and all—they never walked: they drove.

Many little villages lay scattered along the route. They were typical Irish places. One main street, bordered on either hand by low, whitewashed houses and cutting straight through the town, was the characteristic of each. Scarcely ever a dignified church gave them an air of pretension, and a prevailing lack of interest in their surroundings seemed to mark the inhabitants. Open doorways showed into rooms beyond, uncurtained win-



In an Out-of-the-Way German Village

dows let in the light to low interiors, and no flowers brightened the empty window-ledges. Usually these houses looked passably clean (from the exterior, at least), for they were freshly renovated from the summer's white-washing. Gaping ruts in the village street acted as pitfalls for the motor's wheels, and even had there been a time limit, speeding would have been an impossibility.

We could always tell when we were approaching such places. For some distance beyond the utmost' houses, many cows and chickens infested the road. The former were allowed to seek pasture along the highway, while the latter pecked where it seemed good to them. We had one funny experience with a cow. We were approaching a group of these slow-moving animals and had constantly tooted our horn to hurry them to the ditches. They had all done so, with the exception of one inquisitive beast, who stood stock still in the middle of the road refusing to move. We slowed down and approached gradually. But the animal would not stir. Evidently prompted by an unusual curiosity she waited until we were compelled to come to a standstill, then, walking up to the car's

bonnet, she shoved a great flat nose against the radiator. She did not let it rest there long, however, for with a "moo" of pain she sprang away from the hot iron and dashed in a headlong gallop down the highway.

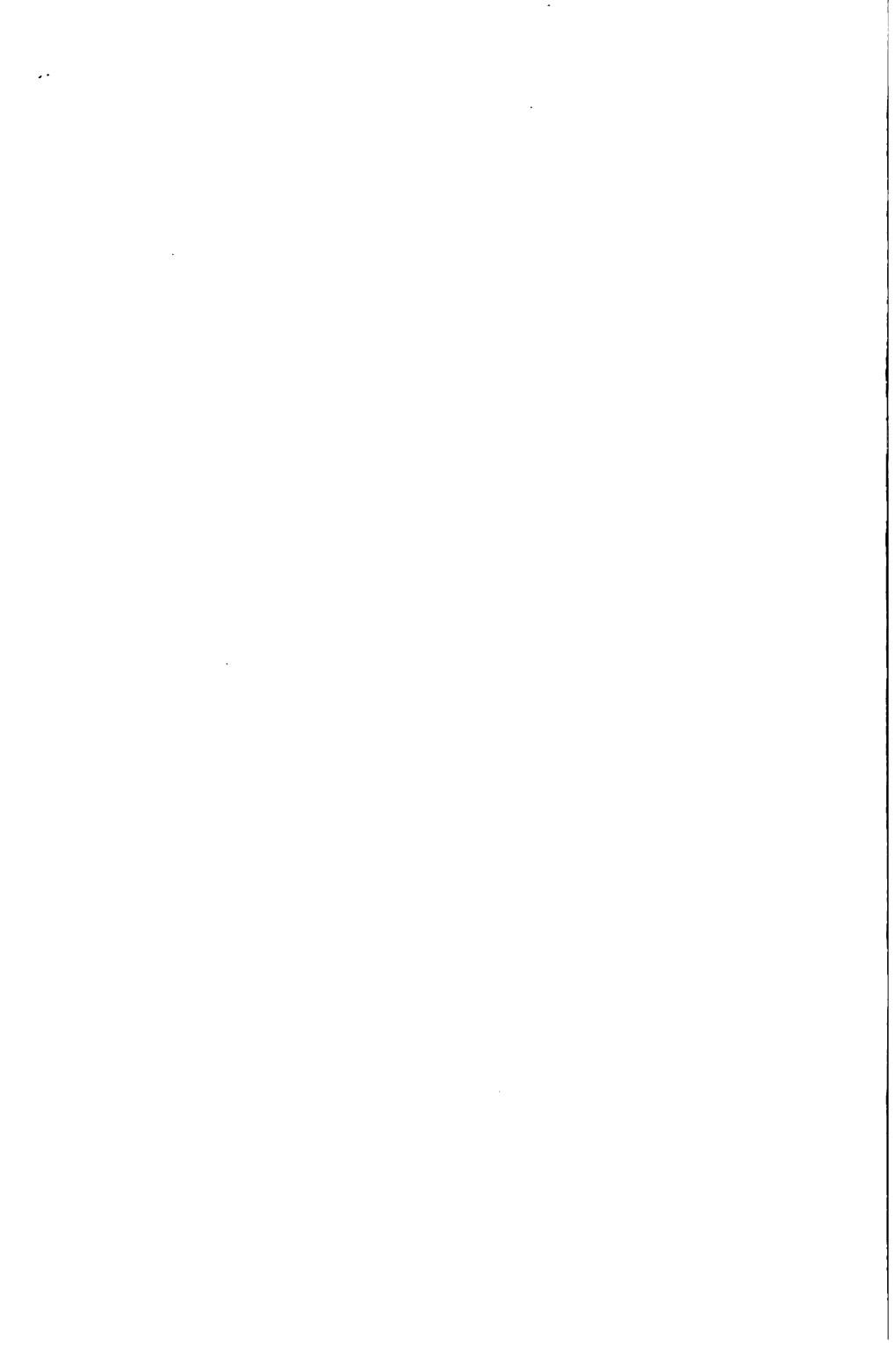
Dublin was given a hurried glance. Only waiting long enough to leave some unnecessary luggage at the hotel, and to rest a moment after the long day's drive, we pushed on to the little town of Carlow. And there, at a tiny inn facing the main street, we stopped for the night.

The next day's run from Carlow to Killarney was the longest of our tour. We made a trip of two hundred and twenty-five miles. Although in reality the distance between the two places is less than that, an untoward event made us cover a greater mileage than we would otherwise have done. At first the roads were poor. We came to the conclusion that they were by-roads, for they led between narrow stone fences most of the time and took us into what seemed a very out-of-the-world district. But later in the day, after Waterford had been passed, they improved, and a wider highway led us to Cork.

Blarney Castle, just outside of this latter



Bayreuth: A Curious Fountain in the Main Street



town could not be resisted; and although it was late in the afternoon, and Killarney, as yet far off, we journeyed there to get a glimpse of the celebrated "Stone" which has made the castle famous. But no matter how much luck is ensured to him who dares kiss the stone (it is awkwardly placed beyond the battlements: one requires more than an ordinary amount of courage to hang head downwards over the wall to reach it), we did not care to risk our lives in the hope of attaining an uncertain good-fortune. However, a few hours later we questioned our wisdom in not having complied with the old-fashioned custom.

We left the castle at about five o'clock in the afternoon and set out for the lakes. A long drive was still ahead of us, for Cork and Killarney are separated by a distance of some fifty-seven miles. As we wished to reach our destination before darkness fell, we often asked our way (for in Ireland it is impossible to journey far without enquiring if one be on the right road, so frequently do the highways cut across each other). Each time we called out the name Killarney to a passer-by he invariably nodded and pointed to continue

ahead. On and on we went until the hour was long past six, without seeming to approach our destination. Then we began to grow a little uneasy, and, although we did our best to assure each other that we could not have gone astray, thoughts of the possibility of having missed the road began to torment us. Finally, we determined to stop the car when we overtook the next wayfarer and find out from him how far distant were the lakes. So when the motor emerged upon a crossroad, where a man and two women were talking, we slowed down and asked if we were near Killarney. At first they looked at us as if they did not understand what we had said; and then from one to the other with a questioning glance which could be translated very plainly by: "What in the world are they talking about!" We repeated our enquiries. Near Killarney! The question seemed too odd. Then the humour of the situation broke upon them. They all smiled. The man stepped forward and told us our mistake. He said that we were many miles from Killarney, but were within a stone's throw of Blarney, and that we could see the keep of the castle just overtopping the trees if we took the



Side Streets often Disclose Picturesque Backgrounds



trouble to look. It was only then we realised that we had lost our way and had for several hours been skirting the countryside around about Cork. Blarney and Killarney—what an annoying similarity between the two names! The people whom we had questioned on the roadside must have confused them and, taking one for the other, had directed us back to the place whence we had set out an hour or two before.

After the meeting at the crossways with the droll Irish trio, we again started on our way, hoping to arrive at our destination before it was very late. But as the roads were unfamiliar and the night dark—two great hindrances for fast travelling—the hour was nearly twelve before we drew into the straggling village which takes its name from the lakes.

Once during the drive we thought that we had lost the way a second time. We stopped the car to go and make enquiries at a near-by peasant hut which could be discerned through the darkness slightly drawn back from the roadway.

It was late, and everything about the little dwelling seemed to be asleep. Not a light

glimmered in the windows. We stumbled across the dirty barn-yard, picking our way through the mud, and avoiding as best we could the many puddles that covered the ground; and arrived at the low entrance without having disturbed any dog from its slumbers. We knocked at the door. Our raps were the signal for five or six canines to commence barking. In a moment such an uproar as we had scarcely ever heard before sounded from within. Expecting to receive an answer, we waited for a few moments. Nobody appeared, so we again knocked, louder and more insistently. Another chorus of growls ensued, followed by the sound of feet shuffling towards the door. A moment later the bolts were withdrawn, and the upper half of the door (for it was divided into two sections) was cautiously opened. The oddest of odd sights met our eyes. Peering through the opening was a very old woman, whose wrinkled face and hag-like features put us in mind of one of the witches in "Macbeth." As she stood framed in the doorway, her hair dishevelled and her eyes straining to accustom themselves to the outer darkness, her appearance was almost unearthly. The background



Heilbronn: One of its Interesting Buildings

of the hut only served to heighten the illusion of the Cawdor witches. At the extreme end of the room, making the shadows appear blacker by contrast, a huge peat fire was blazing. A smoke-blackened pot (undoubtedly a copy of the Weird Sisters' more famous cauldron), was suspended over the flames; and the steam from the boiling contents rose up to the rafters, curled about the ceiling, and escaped through a small round aperture in the roof. The dogs had sprung to their feet and had bounded to the door, where they stood snarling and showing dangerous-looking teeth. They were lean and wolfish, of an appearance well calculated to intimidate the most daring night prowler; and we congratulated ourselves that they were on the other side of the partition. The old woman waved at them to be quiet, and asked what we wanted. At first she eyed us suspiciously, as if uncertain as to our intentions; but when she learned that we were only motorists who had lost the way, she became more friendly and answered our questions without hesitation; pointing out the direction and giving us strict injunctions "not to cross at the first but at the second bridge"—instructions which we followed, to

our ultimate safe arrival. We thanked her, said that we were sorry to have disturbed her doze, and again picked our way across the filthy barn-yard, accompanied by a last volley of shrill barks.

In the morning we were cheered by the sight of bright sun and blue sky. The weather, which before our arrival had been extremely bad, cleared for the day, and gave us the opportunity of seeing the lakes through an atmosphere other than a rainy one.

They are three exceptionally lovely sheets of water—the upper, the middle, and the lower lakes—lying sheltered by low rising mountains and girdled by shelving shores. Near to their waters several ruined castles are picturesquely placed and add to the charm of their natural beauty.

Muckross Abbey and Ross Castle are undoubtedly the two most interesting ruins in the district. The former represents the monastic side of life long ago, while the latter stands as an example of the baronial influence. The abbey is a beautiful ruin, its walls decayed and crumbling, its roof open to the sky. Ivy has overgrown it and has enveloped it with a soft green covering, so that when



Strassburg



seen among the surrounding trees it does not strike the eye as an unsightly wreck, but rather as an addition to the landscape. In the middle of the cloisters there is an ancient yew-tree growing. It was planted when the abbey was founded some six hundred years ago. A custom of the Franciscan Order of Monks was to plant a yew-tree in the centre of the space around which the cloisters were to be built. Ross Castle, like the abbey, is an interesting ruin. Rising up from the shores of Ross Bay, it forms a conspicuous object in the vicinity. The view of the surrounding country from the battlements is very fine and is well worth the tortuous climb up the winding staircase of some ninety-seven steps.

After viewing these ruins we pushed on to Kenmare, following a dangerous road through Dinis Island up the side of the Windy Gap. We were led a breathless drive, for the road clings to the hills as it mounts upward from the lakes. The view that unfolds itself during the ascent is magnificent. The land falls away precipitously in leaps to the valley below; then rushing steeply up the other side it breaks into rocky summits which are almost

always touched by mist; and far below in the distance the little lakes nestle close upon one another looking like mirrors as they reflect the sky.

The descent into Kenmare is hardly less lovely than the ascent from Killarney. Instead of the distant sheets of water a great expanse of country can be seen breaking from the mountains into undulating stretches and sweeping away to terminate once more in another range of deep, blue hills.

A two days' run and we were in Dublin again. We had left Killarney in a downpour of rain, and had splashed a hasty flight through an emerald landscape. Both days we had had snatches of sunshine and hurried showers, the sun and the rain chasing each other in quick succession; and the uncertain weather had given us opportunities of viewing the countryside in varying moods.

At Limerick we had spent the night. Little was to be seen in the city on the Shannon, however, and we pressed on with Dublin as our objective point. All day the sights were the same: the undulating acres, the unkempt hedges, the tiny hovels, and the



The Alps: An Isolated Hospice

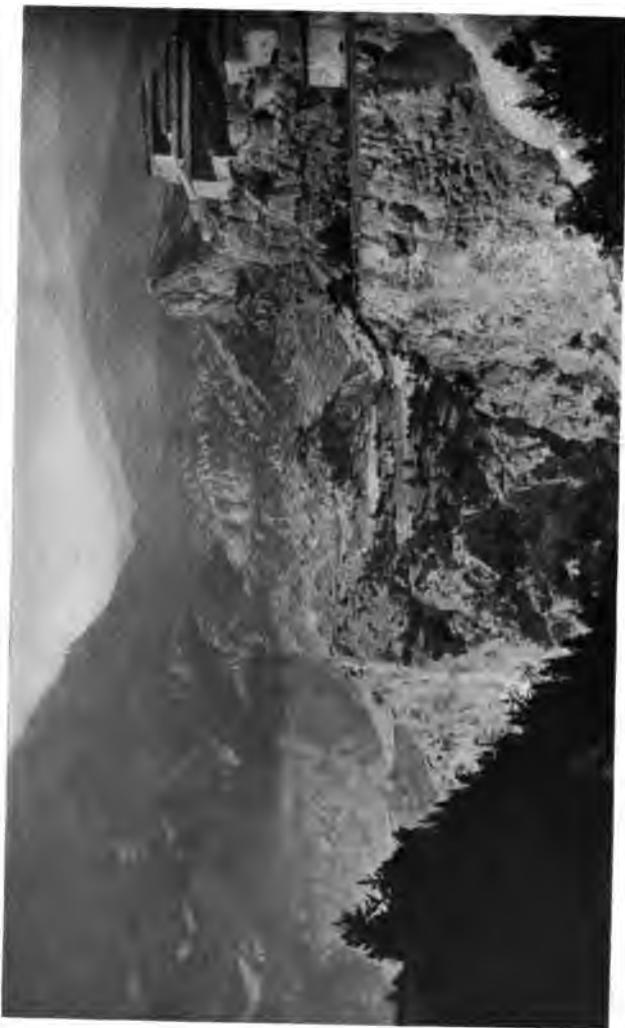


ever-present donkey. These latter infested the roads, they dotted the fields, they came upon one unawares from behind high hedges. They never looked the least disconcerted or frightened when the motor bore down upon them, but stood stolidly stubborn in the middle of the highway waiting to be forced to one side to allow the car to pass.

It was generally a shawl-enveloped woman who took hold of the reins and jerked the stolid beasts to the ditches. The majority of the poorer women wore great shawls. They flung them across their shoulders when it was fine, exposing their faces to the air; but when it rained they enveloped themselves in them from head to foot, and made use of them much as the ordinary person makes use of an umbrella.

We passed through Nenagh—an insignificant town with uninteresting streets and ramshackle houses, and just beyond the place came upon a lot of donkey-pulled carts which were being driven to the market, laden with carrots and cabbages and other vegetables. They made very interesting subjects for a snap-shot; and as we had not before had an opportunity to take a similar scene, we stopped

the car and got the camera ready. The first cart that approached was driven by a woman who had not been blessed with an over-abundance of good looks, and who evidently did not favour the idea of having her features printed on the film of a stranger's camera. So just as the donkey and its load were in splendid focus, she began to wave her arms and gesticulate wildly for us to stop, giving her poor little beast such a cut with the whip that in the ensuing commotion she was all but deposited in the middle of the road. With the second, however, we were more fortunate. It was an old woman and her little grandson who posed for us; and when we told her how well her small companion looked, and what a nice, chubby youngster he was, she was so delighted that she insisted upon us taking her name and address and sending her a picture when it was finished. Whether the print ever reached its destination we have often wondered, for there are doubtless many "Mrs. Mahoneys" in Nenagh who would be as likely to receive it as the right one. Later in the afternoon we arrived at Dublin.



Alpine Grandeur

CHAPTER VII

THE RETURNING FLIGHT TO LONDON

AFTER cutting across Anglesey over the most splendid of roads—its excellence all the more appreciated after the poor condition of the Irish highways—we arrived at Bangor at about nine o'clock. The run, had it been daylight, would have been a charming one. But shortly after Holyhead had been left, the sun sank and a cool, damp mist crept up from the ocean and hid the country for the most part. We arrived at Bangor when it was quite dark, and drove slowly down the narrow main street, searching for an inn through the darkness.

The town is a charmingly situated old Welsh place. It lies in a sort of hollow formed by the hills and borders on the waters of Beaumaris Bay. An ancient cathedral, built in

the shape of a cross, is one of the chief objects of interest; and early the next morning we paid it a visit.

After leaving Bangor, the road takes one through some of the finest of Welsh scenery. It traverses a mountainous region. On all sides slate-coloured mountains rise up to meet the clouds. Their lower slopes, verdant with grass and moss, look soft and clothed, while farther up the rocky summits show dark between the mist. Often they are scarred where the quarries have eaten their way into the slate, and these cuts in the mountainsides have spoiled, to some extent, the beauty of the scenery. Countless waterfalls, which look like white threads from a distance, trickle down the crevices and break into shimmering spray as they leap from fall to fall. In one place a little lake lying in the hollows of the hills borders the road, and the placid sheet of water feeds many a furious torrent in a never-failing supply.

But after Bettws-y-Coëd—that most charming of Welsh beauty-spots—the country gradually changes in character. Jagged mountains simmer down to sloping fields, purple heather gives place to garden flowers, and before the



Verona

confines of Wales are passed, the landscape again becomes quite English.

At Whittington, we came suddenly upon an ancient castle. It confronted us at a turn of the road and showed us a mass of ruined walls and ivy-grown gateways. It bordered on the village street and was only separated from the opposite houses by a slimy moat. A crumbling gateway gave entrance to the building, and the drawbridge, which formerly had spanned the water in great strong beams, was now only a rotten fragment, scarcely able to bear the weight of any one who might wish to cross. As it stood, overhung by drooping trees and covered with vines and creepers, the ruin recalled to mind those pictures so often seen of ancient buildings rising out of picturesque settings—the key-notes of their hamlets, the spots which artists love to paint. And it was because it had broken upon us so unexpectedly and had imprinted itself so strongly on our minds that Whittington was, to us, more than an ordinary village.

We descended on Shrewsbury through quaint streets. We got a foretaste of the city as we drove down between the lines of antique houses which form the outskirts. The streets

were narrow and irregular—so narrow that, in places where the overreaching stories of the timbered dwellings came together above the roadway, shutting out light and air, very little of the blue sky could be seen overhead, still less of the sun, which scarcely succeeded in reaching the lowest windows to brighten up the rooms below. Most of them were very hilly, and cobbles took the place of pavement. Formerly being a market-town, many butchershops are to be seen in the older portions—all quaint buildings which knock against each other at various angles. Even to-day they still serve the same purpose.

Looking through the wide windows, one can see meat and fowl hanging from the rafters and on the walls; and the butcher—a big, jolly, red-faced man—is always busy with his axe, chopping joints while the customer waits.

And so on down the uneven streets, each odd house tells its own story. This one, with the quaint sign-board hanging out over the old-fashioned coach-entrance, is an inn which was, no doubt, fashionable once upon a time, even if to-day it can boast of no large patronage. That one, where clocks and watches show from behind leaded panes and where

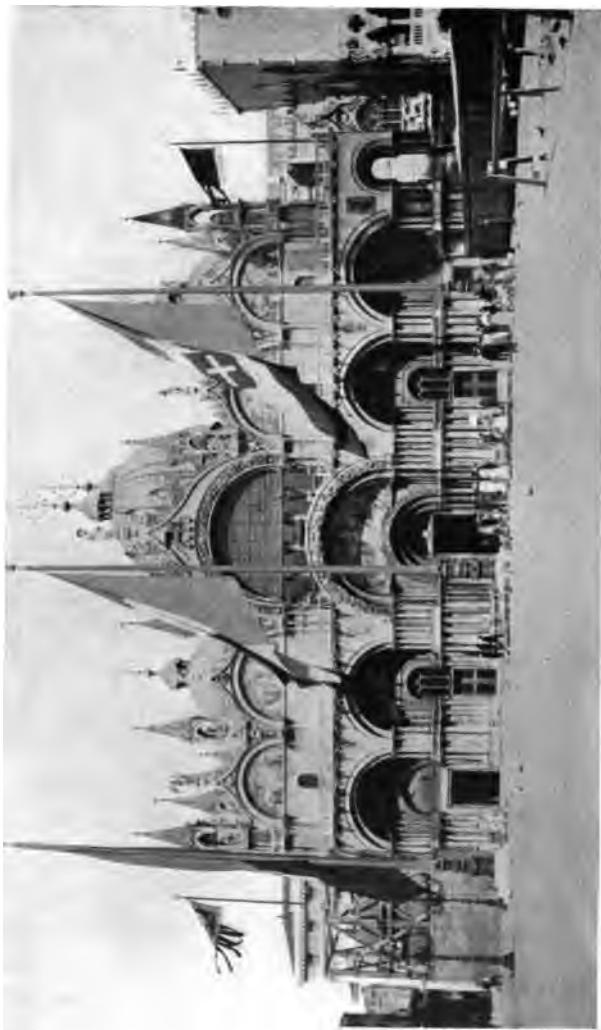
the striking of a hundred bells makes itself heard through the open door, is a watchmaker's; while another, an antique shop, in which doubtless many more modern than genuine "antiques" are sold, tempts the passer-by to enter and look about. Thus they succeed each other down the roadway in interesting picturesqueness until the feudal castle relegates them all to a second place. It is an imposing pile which stands overlooking a square. From the elevated position, its red walls and two round corner-towers, dating from the time of Edward I, rise up behind stout barricades of stones. It caps the climax to the town; and one leaves Shrewsbury with the castle foremost among other recollections.

Regaining the open, the road again traverses lovely country. Everywhere wide-spread acres and shady meadows, tiny villages and scattered hamlets meet the eye. In the fields many reapers are at work cutting down the hay and piling it on to near-by hay-carts. The scent of the new-mown grass reaches to the road, heavy and fragrant with summer. By the wayside, scarlet poppies grow in profusion. They peep from out the long

grasses, mingle with the corn-flowers in the fields and, as the wind plays over them, sway like heavy-headed grain before a breeze.

The road stretches out in long lines to Birmingham. We sped over its magnificent surfaces as if the car had wings. We hurried through the great manufacturing city as fast as the law allows—faster, indeed!—for we wished to leave behind as soon as possible the smoky atmosphere and disagreeable tenements. On our return visit nothing could tempt us to stay. We preferred to pass the night in quieter Coventry, free from the dust and noise of the great metropolis. And so it was not long before we had left it in our rear, and ahead was the connecting ribbon which reached away to Godiva's city.

From a distance, as one draws near, the three spires of Coventry strike upon the eye, looking like slender needles outlined against the blue. On closer approach, a mass of roof-tops and chimneys springs into view, and then long uneven streets open up and swallow one. Parts of Coventry are very ancient, and parts—the main streets—quite modern: for in those places where the houses are overhanging and tottering, and where the roadways are



Venice: St. Mark's Cathedral



dark and narrow, the mediæval note of the town is struck; but where 20th century tram-lines force themselves upon one with relentless persistence, and where taxi-cabs necessitate agility in crossing the streets, it is impossible to quite forget that Coventry is a city of the present as well as of the past. It boasts of many interesting buildings. Its three beautiful churches—one of which is said to be the finest parish church in England; Ford's Hospital, a quaint old timbered building that gives refuge to a number of aged folk; and Henry VIII's banqueting-hall, with its tapestries and its old woodwork, are among the most interesting places to visit.

A splendid road connects Kenilworth with Coventry. It is a long white strip stretching far down between an avenue of noble trees. It looks not unlike the "Long Walk" at Windsor.

Over this excellent highway we made our way next morning, after we had taken leave of the "City of the Three Spires." All the way to Kenilworth, we flew past low-lying meadows where cattle cropped, and past sweet-scented hay-fields where the hay-makers worked. Everywhere, little thatched

cottages peeped from flower gardens, showing deep, brown thatches above masses of variegated colour. The hedges were wild in pink roses, the fields were red in bright poppies, and the banks of the ditches painted in all the varied shades of the wayside flowers.

The ruins at Kenilworth are very imposing. Apart from their beauty they have an additional interest on account of their historical associations. Sir Walter Scott has cast a glamour of romance about the splendid pile in his famous tale, and one can almost people the fallen castle with some of the celebrated personages who figure in it—Queen Elizabeth and Leicester and Amy Robsart and a countless stream of others.

Warwick—a pretty old town with its celebrated castle—and then Stratford-on-Avon is reached!

One finds Stratford stocked with Shakespearean memories. At every step reminders of the great bard rise up to confront one. So many interest-spots act as magnets that it is difficult to decide which to visit first; but finally the house in which he was born and the church where he is buried exercise stronger powers

of attraction and draw one toward them.

We sought the former, for we wished to receive our first impressions from the spot which was the very starting-point of the poet's life. It is a quaint timbered building that we found in Henley Street, with leaded windows breaking here and there, the lath and plaster walls and a gabled roof crowning the whole in a covering of shingles, and is filled with mementoes of the greatest of dramatists. Each little room has its own individual interest: in one is the desk at which he used to work at school; in another fac-similes of his last will and testament hang on the walls; while upstairs the bare low-ceiled room in which he was born is perhaps the most interesting of them all. On the window panes the names of Carlyle and Sir Walter Scott are scratched, while on the ceiling Browning and Thackeray have scribbled their signatures.

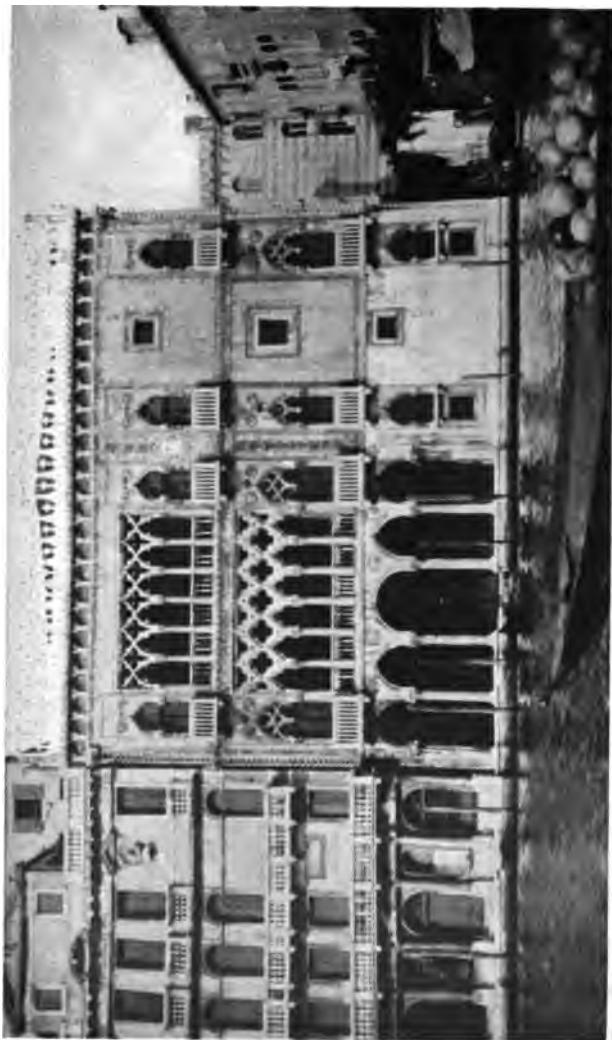
Then, afterwards, in contrast to the birth-place, Shakespeare's last resting-place in the elm-surrounded Church of the Holy Trinity, was the spot which claimed us, and we wandered through the beautiful building after having read the world-known epitaph:

Good friend for Jesus' sake forbear,
To dig the dust enclosed here:
Blest be the man that spares these stones
And cursed be he that moves my bones.

Lastly, the Memorial Library, on the banks of the Avon having been visited, Anne Hathaway's deep-thatched cottage, which lies surrounded by a brilliant flower garden in the hamlet of Shottery, completed our pilgrimage to the Shakespeare country.

As we drove away from the little place, a band of children, arms laden with fragrant flowers, came running up to us pleading with us to buy. A moment later, when we left, many roses had been taken in exchange for many pennies.

A run to classical Oxford, a delightful stay in that tranquil city—and then we found ourselves descending upon the noise and bustle of London.



Venice: Ca' d'Oro

PART II

THE CONTINENTAL JOURNEY

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CHAPTER I

PICTURESQUE HOLLAND

WE left London for Tilbury filled with an intense desire to see the Netherlands. We had always pictured to ourselves the flapping windmills and the stone dykes of the country that lies below the level of the sea, and had determined to pay it a visit as soon as possible, to see for ourselves the sights and scenes about which we had read so much. So when we caught our first glimpse of the country of the dykes in the morning after the steamer had made a rough crossing from Tilbury and was sailing more smoothly in the quieter waters of the Hook of Holland, we were delighted.

Our introduction to the country was the sight of a long, flat strip of land stretching far out into the sea. From the steamer's deck it seemed nothing more than low-lying ground,

lonely and uninhabited, needing the protection of stout stone dykes to ward off the onslaughts of the waves. Later, as the boat approached Rotterdam, rows of trees fringed the landscape in narrow lines, following the different canals as they cut their courses through the fields. Houses began to appear, to give signs of life to the countryside; and, now and then, the presence of a man or woman contradicted one's first ideas of uninhabitation.

We were welcomed to our first Holland city by a dull, grey sky. The smoke from the hundreds of ship funnels filled the air and hung low down over the harbour. A suggestion of rain was in the atmosphere, and a cold wind blew inland from the sea. Although at first the prospects for a fine day were not promising, before we had landed the weather changed. The clouds scurried away at the arrival of the sun and left in their stead bright patches of blue sky. The sunshine smiled on the busy quay and played over the ships and barges. It lighted up the muddy harbour water, warming it into grey-brown shades. It glittered on the rows of trees that lined the dock front and dried the moisture from the



The Giants' Staircase in the Court of the Doge's Palace

leaves. It brightened the faces of the people, bringing out smiles instead of frowns. In a few sudden moments it worked wonderful changes.

Then the bustle of landing, the taking the motor ashore, occupied us for some long time. The car had to be carefully raised by a derrick, bound fast by many ropes and chains, lowered over the side of the boat, and deposited on the cobbles which paved the quay's edges. After the custom officers finished their inspection, after they bade us "good-bye," with many a friendly nod, with many a wish that our Holland trip would prove the most enjoyable of all our tour, we got into the motor and started on the first day's run of our continental journey.

We did not leave Rotterdam at once. We drove about the streets to acquaint ourselves with the city. Every sight was new to us. The long tree-lined canals filled with barges, the divided streets spanned by their connecting bridges, the dog-drawn milk-carts with their polished milk pails gleaming rich brass in the sunlight; the low-rising houses crowding upon each other in irregular fashion; and above all the jolly, good-natured people whom we saw everywhere, charmed and delighted us.

The road for The Hague leaves Rotterdam by following close beside a canal. Now running under a fringe of trees, now emerging in the open, where the sun and wind play unhindered on its surface, it skirts the curving waterway along the top of a dyke. It is a bricked highway, connecting the two cities by a dull red ribbon.

From this highway as one drives past one gets charming glimpses of the canal making its way between the fields. One can see the narrow strip of water flowing across country higher up than the pastures in which black-and-white cattle graze, and reaching out mile after mile the same taut line that never widens. On the water many barges sail. Some, heavily laden, make slow progress against the wind; others skim over the surface like birds, splashing a hasty flight as the breeze blows them forward. They are extremely picturesque boats. Lying low in the water, their gunwales on a level with the surface, their decks piled high with merchandise, and their tall masts bending under the strain of bellying sails they present an appearance quite in keeping with their surroundings. On the decks women are often washing

clothes. They lean far over the sides as they soap and rub the dirty garments in the canal water. Then, after they have cleaned them to their satisfaction and have rinsed them free of any remaining drops, they hang them across ropes to dry in the breeze. Sometimes the women wear little white caps, shaped somewhat like small bonnets, and these they fasten to their heads by means of long hairpins.

At Delft we had to stop and give ourselves a breathing space. Although there was only fourteen miles between that town and Rotterdam, the distance had been choked with the newness of things, the impressions too varied and manifold. It was a delightful sense of rest which took hold of us as we entered the new—though very old—church there. The pure white interior, with its high soaring roof and its stalls of age-darkened wood, took our thoughts away from the canals, the windmills, and the long flat fields; and the different monuments that were everywhere in the church and the tablets on the walls made us think only of the lives of the great men of Holland. The church is the burying-place of the royal family. In it since 1584

various members of the reigning house have been interred

Delft itself is a quaint town, famous for its pottery. Its narrow streets are cut in two by tree-fringed canals. Its houses rise from the sidewalks, very clean and neat, with odd old gables crowning brick fronts, and with windows bright in pretty flowers. Its two churches—the old and the new—add to the charm of the place, for they both represent a style of Dutch church architecture.

It is but a short run from Delft to The Hague. The distances in Holland from city to city are never long, and with a motor-car one can pass from town to town in quick succession. But the motorist has no desire to travel rapidly. There is too much of interest in the countryside to allow him to rush through it in rude haste. So he leaves a town with an expectancy for the drive ahead since the road always leads through a landscape of which one can never tire—a landscape which has for its chief characteristics flat fields, black-and-white cattle, windmills, and canals.

The Dutch roads are excellent if one does not travel over them at too high a rate of speed. The surface is always brick and is



Venice: St. Mark's Cathedral and Doge's Palace

fairly even. As to the picturesqueness of their surroundings justice cannot be done, for always they lead through charming country, now taking through the heart of fairy-like woods, now leading out into open spaces, now skirting close to the margin of a canal, past heavy barges trailed by tired men, now through little villages that are distinctly different in character from the English towns, and always giving delightful rural pictures beyond the roadway.

We fell in love with The Hague as quickly as we had done with Delft. Its streets, its squares, its buildings, and its parks, all took hold of us and kept us captive. It is one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. Although it is not the capital of Holland, yet, oddly enough, The Hague is the seat of the Dutch Government. Its origin is curious. In the year 1250 or thereabouts, an unpretentious hunting-lodge belonging to the counts of Holland was the only dwelling in the vicinity. Around this other houses began to be built, until gradually a little town sprang up, which developed later on into the most aristocratic of all Holland's cities. This city became the capital of the Netherlands and remained in

that capacity until the year 1806, when Napoleon transformed Holland from a republic into a kingdom and removed the seat of government from The Hague to Amsterdam. Under Louis Napoleon The Hague suffered extremely. Many of its universities were transferred to Utrecht and Amsterdam. However, at the return of the Prince of Orange in 1813, the city regained much of its former importance and the seat of the government was once more reinstated at The Hague. The neighbouring seaside resort, Scheveningen—fashionable, frivolous, Frenchified Scheveningen—with its hotels and casino, beach and pier, is not without its charms too, and one could spend days there and never grumble.

We left The Hague full of regrets. Our stay there had been a most enjoyable one. We were delighted with the clean appearance of the place, with the shining door-knockers, with the gleaming brass milk-cans, with the well-kept parks and avenues, with the wide streets and handsome houses. In short, we were pleased with everything connected with The Hague.

An avenue of shade joins The Hague to

Haarlem. The road—as all Dutch roads—is bricked and narrow. It leads past many tulip fields, where the bulbs are cultivated in the sand. It takes through open stretches where the wind blows clouds of sand across the highway. It leads into little villages where the streets are clean and the sidewalks washed, where the shutters are painted and the window-panes shine, where the people are healthy and the children fat. It slips over bridges that span the canals, beside dykes where the water flows, and past wind-mills that stand stock still.

The people whom one sees are quite ordinary-looking men and women. They dress in very much the same fashion as do the English or French or Germans. Their every-day clothes are not the baggy trousers, the wide skirts, the blue caps and the white coifs so often seen in pictures of Holland life. Only the children are garbed a little out of the common. They wear wooden shoes in place of boots—wooden shoes which look like Dutch boats in miniature, and which, in fact, are very often used as such by their young possessors. As the boys and girls run about the streets, a great clattering is made, owing

to this unusual kind of footwear; and this noise, combined with their shouts and laughter, quite belies their sober looks and shy manners.

A short run brought us to another very interesting Dutch city, Haarlem. Situated in the heart of a great bulb district and surrounded for miles by fields which are devoted to the culture of tulips and hyacinths, it is the centre of one of Holland's most important industries. It has had a varied history, for besides having been thrice destroyed by fire, it sustained a terrible siege in 1572 against the Duke of Alva, who, when the city fell at the end of seven months, caused half of its citizens to be put to death. It also was the birthplace of several noted Dutchmen, including the painter Wouverman.

But although Haarlem claimed our attention for a little while, Amsterdam was only a few miles distant, holding out exceptional interest in its splendid art galleries. So, forsaking the smaller for the greater town, we drove on to the capital.

En route we saw many dogs drawing carts. It was most amusing to watch the poor animals as they tugged and strained at their



Venice: A Less Familiar Water-Way



loads. Sometimes two abreast, sometimes only one, they were harnessed underneath the carts between the wheels. They all seemed to know what was expected of them, for they worked as steadily as if they had been horses. Although they were amusing to see, with their great muzzles and large collars, our amusement was often mingled with a touch of pity when we contrasted their lot with the happier conditions of other members of dogdom.

From Amsterdam we made a trip to "Holland the Quaint"—the towns of Volendam and Marken. We had heard so much about these novel little places that we determined to seize the opportunity of seeing them while we were still at Amsterdam. The day we paid them a visit we forsook the motor for a slow-moving steam launch, and instead of skirting the water along the dykes we steamed down the canals and got impressions of the country from water highways.

As the boat pulls away from the dock at Amsterdam and makes for the lock at the other side of the harbour a splendid view of the city and its busy water front can be obtained. All along the quays many boats are tied up—

boats of all descriptions, from small excursion steamers to gigantic ocean liners. There are vessels from China and Japan pouring forth rich oriental cargoes; steamers from the Indies just arrived, discharging loads of human freight; and, almost laden and ready to depart, are other sea-going craft bound for the far-off Dutch possessions. And behind this confusion of masts and boat funnels the city rises up.

When the little slow-moving steam launch has passed the lock and has just emerged on to one of the widest of all Holland canals, one sees ahead a long, long strip of water stretching far into the distance in an ever-narrowing V. On either side the ground lies low. Damp, green fields spread out from the dyke's edge in flat reaches of meadow-land, and form delightful pasturages for the herds of black-and-white cattle which browse in them from morn till night. In the distance thin fringes of trees rise up—lanky poplars that line the brick-paved roadways as they cut their way across the country. In the farther backgrounds, huge windmill-arms flap wildly in the wind.

For a long time the boat plies steadily down

this long-drawn canal, sending little wavelets to wash among the willows as it pushes its nose through the water; and when at length a picturesque village is approached, it slows down gradually and stops at a little wharf which forms the entrance-door to the town.

Broek-in-Waterland is the name of the small place. It is an odd name; and when translated into English it is odder still, for it means "Trousers-in-Wetland." In former times the village was renowned for its cleanliness, it being in reality a spotless town. No horses were allowed to drive up its main street, and any man who smoked had to have a cover for his pipe while passing through this thoroughfare. Even to-day, although these old-fashioned customs have died out, the town is a model of cleanliness. The houses are neatly painted; the window-panes shine; the brass door-knockers glint brightly as the sun strikes on them; and the door-steps—on which it looks as if no foot has ever trod—are well scrubbed and dazzlingly whitewashed.

We entered one of the little houses to get a glimpse of a Dutch interior. It was a cheese farm. Everywhere in the workrooms huge yellow cheeses were laid out on shelves to dry.

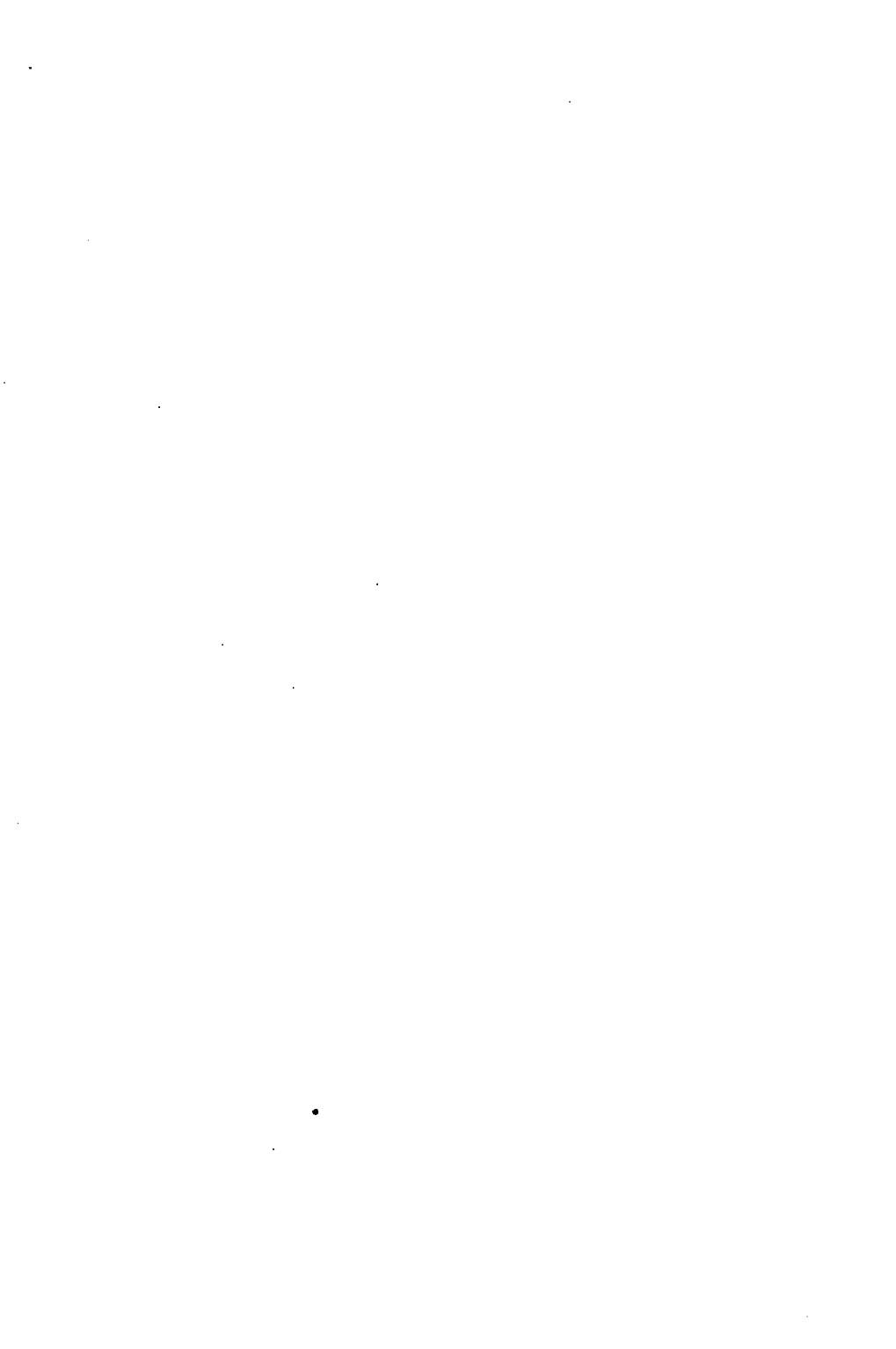
They looked like immense pumpkins or full moons as they lined the different racks, and only two eyes, a nose, and a mouth cut into each would have been sufficient to transport our thoughts to Hallowe'en or to the lunary planet. Churns and milk-cans and all the variegated utensils necessary for the process of converting milk into cheese were ranged about the rooms; and for the reception and final safe-keeping of the cheeses themselves large cupboard-like presses lined the walls.

Undoubtedly this small farmhouse was the cleanest dwelling in all Broek-in-Waterland. In the stables the cows' tails were not allowed to rest on the floor when the animals lay down, but were slipped into little nooses and suspended from the ceiling by straps.

When the boat leaves this unique Dutch village it goes next to Monnikendam—the "monastery on the dyke"; the "dead city of the Zuyder Zee." It is a sleepy town, which almost forgets its own existence, so quiet and noiseless are the streets. Once it was a prosperous place—a pretentious church gives evidence of that—but lately its population has decreased and it has degenerated into an unambitious hamlet. The houses are very quaint;



Florence; The Cathedral



beautiful gables crown their roofs. Many of the windows are screened by great, painted shutters—so strong that no burglar would attempt to break them—and when these are closed, the streets present quite an uncommon appearance. In the different shops all sorts of brasses can be seen.

After Monnikendam, Volendam is the next place at which the steam launch stops. The little boat forsakes the narrow canals and, instead of steaming slowly down between protecting dykes, ploughs its way across the open sea at quicker pace. As it approaches Volendam, hundreds of masts, with their ropes and riggings and with pennants floating in the breeze, can be seen rising from the harbour.

We landed at a narrow wharf at the entrance of this forest-like port, and after making a tortuous way along a stone dyke, found ourselves in the centre of the town.

It was Sunday. All the men, women, and children were dressed in their gala attire. The men wore big, baggy trousers, wooden shoes, and little round caps; the women and girls had on pretty coifs and coloured blouses and wide skirts; and the children looked like

large Dutch dolls with bulging cheeks and serious eyes.

We walked about the quaint streets, entranced by the novelty of it all, glancing into the fishers' homes, and taking many shap-shots of them.

These little houses are models of cleanliness. As one steps into the living-rooms a bewildering array of different objects meets the eye. Rows upon rows of plates cover the walls, each plate shining and spotlessly clean; pictures hang everywhere, decorating the rafters, finding place between the plaques, and peeping from behind brass pots and kettles; huge chests contain the household linen, highly polished but very massive furniture for such small rooms; and the fireplaces are surrounded by pans and bed-warmers, pokers and fire-tongs.

The beds in these houses are very curious. They are built into the walls and look like immense cupboards from the room. They have doors which are closed at night. One would imagine that they were the most unhealthy of sleeping-places, but after learning that whole families—father, mother, and some five or six children—have slept in them for

years with comparatively little sickness, one is forced to conclude that they must be more sanitary than they look.

We paid a visit to several of these Dutch homes. As we crossed the thresholds, the housewives came forward to bid us welcome. In one, we saw a dear little child asleep in a built-in bed, hugging its doll tightly with both arms. The mother, poor woman, was a widow who had lost her husband some short time before. He had been a fisherman and had been drowned at sea. In another tiny home the good wife made us sit down until she had brewed us some coffee. She placed before us miniature cups, and a jug filled with thick rich cream. When the coffee was ready, she took it from the fire and poured the steaming black liquid into our "thimbles." After we had drunk it and had complimented her, she brought out a box filled with white lace coifs of her own handiwork. She was a very old woman, who supported herself by making these quaint head-dresses which she sold to visitors. When we said "good-bye" she came with us to the door and watched us until we had turned into another street and were out of sight.

As we passed through the different streets we often noticed numerous pairs of wooden shoes at the entrances of the houses. A Dutchman never wears his boots in the house but always leaves them off before the door-step. So if there are seven pairs of shoes outside, there are seven people within; or if four shoes are without, one knows that two people are inside.

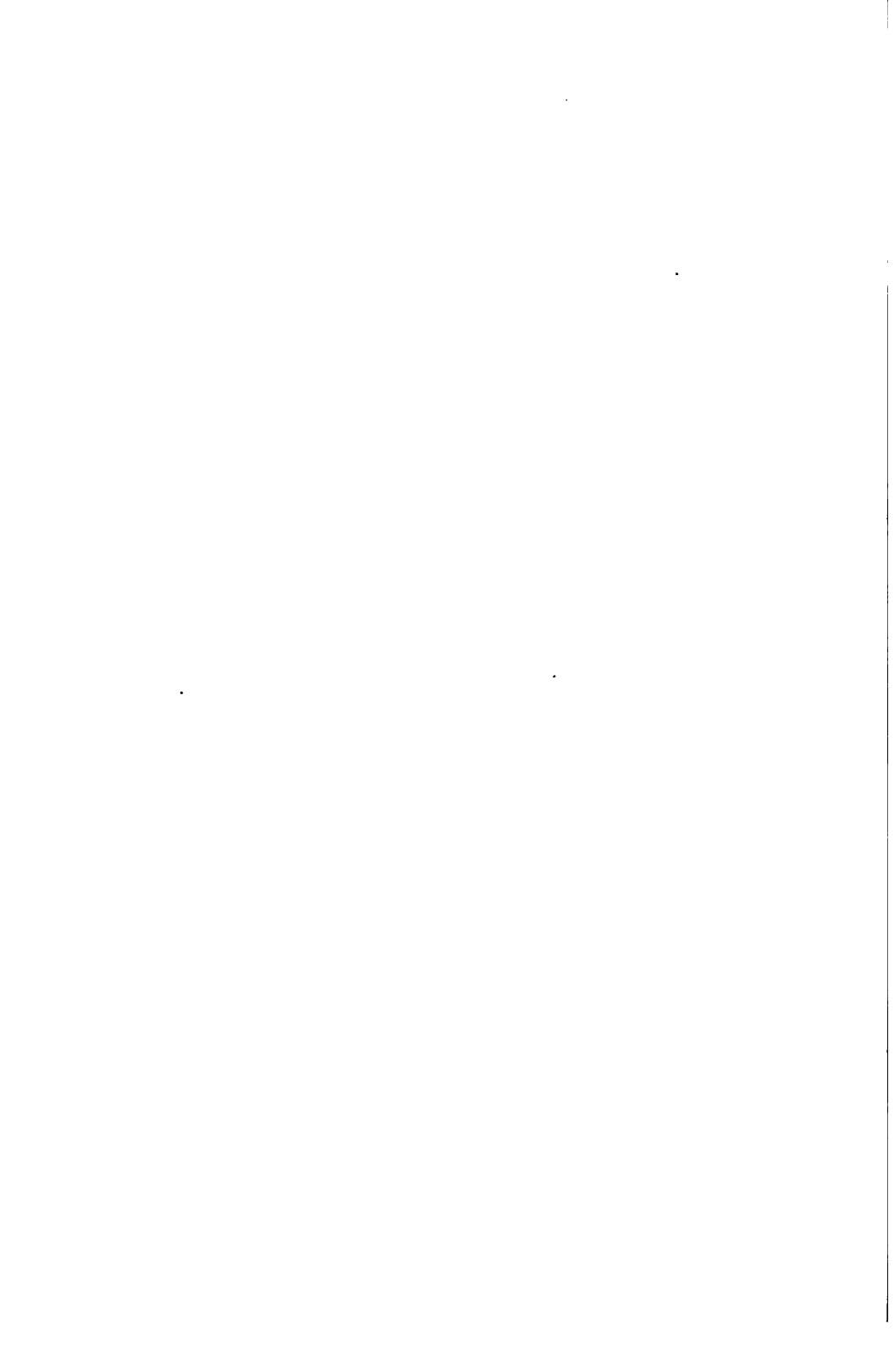
These fisher folk are fond of being snap-shotted, provided that they receive a small gratuity. If one carries a camera one is surrounded by ready posers who come and stand and ask to be photographed. They make very interesting subjects, too, with their quaint dresses, their baggy trousers, and their smiling faces!

From Volendam a short sail brought us to the Isle of Marken. As we approached we could see the tiny island stretching out in a thin, black line on the surface of the water. Then as the boat drew closer, another forest of poles broke upon the eye—other masts, other pennants, other fishing smacks; and when we landed, more quaint people came down to meet the boat.

Immediately we noticed that the costume is



Florence: The Pitti Palace



different from that of the Volendamers. The trousers of the men bag only to the knees. The women wear another style of cap, more of a lace bonnet, which consists of five separate pieces. The boys and girls are dressed alike up to a certain age, the former only distinguished from the latter by a round spot on the cap and a white strip down the front of the blouse.

Here, as we had done at Volendam, we entered several of the houses. That of the *bürgermeister* was very pretty. In the living-room many fine old plates lined the walls, and several handsome pieces of furniture were scattered about the various rooms. The mistress of the house received us very graciously, and her daughter brought out the wedding-dress in which she was to be married next year. This bridal-dress was greatly prized; it had been handed down for generations from mother to daughter, and had been worn only on marriage days or on very special occasions. The prospective bridegroom was there, and we shook hands and wished him much happiness.

Even the poorest houses are clean. For sake of contrast, we paid a visit to what was considered one of the least pretentious dwellings on the island. Compared to the hovels

of Ireland it was a palace indeed. Spotless windows, shining pots and pans, polished woodwork, and well-scrubbed floors made us wonder if poverty in Holland were a fallacy—a myth.

From Marken the slow-moving steam launch took us back to Amsterdam. It was a delightful two hours' sail across the Zuyder Zee. Often the steamer passed close to full-sail fishing smacks, and gave us glimpses of the picturesque boats and their stalwart sailors.

CHAPTER II

FROM THE FRONTIER TO BERLIN

WE left Amsterdam when we took the road via Utrecht and Arnheim for Germany. Nearly all the way to the border we travelled over brick roads and under leafy trees, past low-lying land and beside cool, quiet canals, through clean, sleepy towns and over stone-arched bridges. We saw the typical Dutch landscape everywhere—the same flat fields, the same wide-armed windmills and the same black-and-white cattle.

But after Utrecht the country began to change in character, growing higher here and there as it drew away from the sea. There were fewer canals and fewer mills.

Outside of Arnheim many beautiful villas were to be seen. For miles these charming country-seats lined the road. They looked almost French in appearance, and their white

walls, green shutters and red roofs suggested the villas of the Côte d'Azur.

After crossing the Rhine over a bridge of boats, we traversed only a small space of Holland, and took leave of that delightful windmill country when we crossed the frontier into Germany.

From the frontier we flew on to Cologne, over a splendid road, passing through a country that was spread out in level reaches of hay-field and meadow land. Very often beside the highway crosses were erected, and now and then candles burned before a wayside shrine. In one town—in Verelaer—we came suddenly upon a square, in which people were kneeling far out on the pavement before a candle-lit altar. As we passed through the streets we saw the shop windows crowded with images of saints and martyrs, and above many of the doors little niches with statues of the Virgin were let into the walls.

We slipped into Cologne when it was already dusk. The mist from off the fields had made the countryside pale grey, and had obliterated the twin towers of the cathedral. We got a blurred impression of the city as we slipped through: wide lamp-lit streets, sub-



Florence: The Ponte Vecchio

stantial buildings, one feudal gateway, and the cathedral.

We discerned it first through the darkness, when it loomed up skyward one vast indistinguishable structure—one big black blur against a deep, dark sky. Our second sight was on the morning later, when the light disclosed the magnificent beauty of the building, when it revealed its soaring spires, its flying buttresses, its western front, and its delicate carvings.

We left Cologne with the rain beating hard against the wind-screen. All the way to Coblenz a steady downpour fogged the landscape. After lunch, however, the day cleared. It had repented of its bad humour, atoning for its fault by giving us a splendid afternoon in which to view the beauties of the Rhineland.

The drive from Coblenz to Bingen was a triumphal progression through legend-laden scenery. All up the river we feasted our eyes on mountains and castles, on vineyards, and on the swiftly-flowing water.

The castles, to a great extent, make the landscape. They always top the highest peaks and form bold silhouettes against the

sky. They are wonderful buildings brought into existence by the wizard-builders of long ago. How they were ever built is a marvel, for they cling to the summits of the hills as if they were portions of the rock itself, and look more like the imaginary castles of a fairy-book than the actual dwellings of men. Many of them are still inhabited; and from the distance can be seen wreaths of smoke curling from the chimneys, or flowers brightening rugged gardens, or a flag flying proudly from a far-off turret. And the legends they bring to mind; stories of Rosenlak, the Drachenfels, and of the softly singing Lorelei, who ensnared unwary sailors by her sweet songs. Bingen was the town that capped the climax to the day's run, for after it the country, loosed from the bondage of the confining hills, breaks away into a broad valley.

At Mayence we stopped for the night, and were up early in the morning to view its great Byzantine Cathedral; and later on in the day continued on our way to Frankfort-on-Main.

Frankfort is one of the finest of German cities. Its wide, clean streets, its handsome buildings, its many monuments, and its open

squares instantly impress upon the visitor the stateliness of its appearance. It is splendidly situated, too, on the banks of the Main; and many bridges connect the divided portions of the city.

We left Frankfort fully intending to go direct to Heidelberg. It had been our intention to follow up the Rhine as far as Strassburg and to stop off at many of the little towns on its banks to see their different interest-spots. When we were already well on our way to Darmstadt, however, a town situated about half way between Frankfort and Heidelberg, we unexpectedly changed our plans. The sudden realisation of the pity of missing Berlin brought us to a standstill. To leave Germany without seeing its capital would be as great a mistake as to leave Italy without seeing Rome. We stopped the car by the roadside, brought out all our maps of Germany and fell to discussing the easiest and most direct route to the capital. In a few moments everything was arranged. The engine was started; the car turned; and soon we were retracing our steps Frankfortwards, to set out from thence on a two-days' journey to Berlin.

It was a hurried run, for between the two cities a distance of some four hundred and seventy-eight kilometres had to be covered, and we wished to be in the capital over the Sunday. But although little less than a flight, we found time to receive at least a superficial impression of the country and its people.

Both days we raced away over good roads through a very lovely country. Both days the landscape was typically German—nothing in it to remind one of rural England. No well-trimmed hedges bordered the roads; no cattle fed in the fields or browsed along the highway, as did the English cows; and no pretty little farmhouses set in the midst of their orchards peeped from among the blossoms.

Instead, the highway flowed on from village to village, unprotected by any fences. The fields rolled back from the ditches in great undulating waves, breaking against the horizon like the billows of a vast green ocean.

In almost every town we saw detachments of soldiers drilling. They went through their drills with magnificent precision, responding to the shouts of command in a clock-like



Perugia: The Palazzo Pubblico



regularity. They always made a very interesting sight as they exercised; and often we slowed down the car to watch them.

On the morning of the first day, we lunched at Fulda. Our first impressions of the place as we entered it by back streets were anything but favourable. We satisfied ourselves that it would be impossible to get luncheon anywhere in the town. But a pleasant surprise awaited us as we emerged from a narrow thoroughfare on to an imposing square. In front a stately palace with massive grilled entrance-gates, long rows of Renaissance windows, and a far-reaching court met our eyes; and—what was of more importance to us at that particular moment—to the right a rambling stone inn gave promise of a substantial meal.

After a typically German lunch, in which sauerkraut figured prominently, we strolled about the castle gardens, learning that they had formerly belonged to the Hesse family, but that, having been bought by the town, they had been transformed into a public park.

During the afternoon's run we saw many interesting sights. There were oxen yoked in pairs, pulling great loaded wagons; women

bent down under their burdens of brushwood; men in the forests, cutting down the pine trees; children in the fields flying their kites; soldiers resting after a long tramp—innumerable things that kept us always interested, always on the alert.

We passed through several semi-royal towns. Each, as Fulda, with its stately castle, had a royal air of its own. Gotha, Eisenach, and Weimar, all proved their claims to royalty through being the seats of different princely families. They were very interesting old towns, and we would like to have lingered in them longer had the weather been fine and Berlin nearer.

At Weimar, where we spent the night, there is a great deal to compel attention. The city is the capital of the grand-duchy of Saxe-Weimar, and is celebrated as the seat of German literature. Here Goethe, Herder, Schiller, and other literary geniuses wrote many of their best works. On this account the city has received the appellation of the "Athens of Germany." The imposing palace with its magnificent gardens adds much to the dignity of the town.

As we left the next morning, we passed

through the market place. The day was Saturday, and it seemed as if the whole neighbouring country folk had come in to the city to dispose of their stocks. Every conceivable kind of article from vegetables to oxen, from boots to silks and linens was for sale. In one booth, little wild strawberries, fresh-picked that very morning in the country, were temptingly displayed in baskets garnished with green leaves. In another, all sorts of flowers stood in watering-cans or in tin pails, looking quite fresh in the early morning, although, doubtless, they would wilt later on under the heat of the noonday sun. Side by side with these, other stalls showed fish or poultry, or butter and eggs, until the whole square was a heterogeneous collection of peasants, animals, carts, and produce. The strawberries and cherries were delicious; we could testify to that: we bought baskets of them and ate them in the car.

All morning we drove through a cherry district. For miles, the road was lined with fruit trees. Between the leaves the cherries hung in great thick bunches, red and ripe and ready for picking. The pickers were out in hundreds, and were clinging to the branches,

or perched on high ladders, or standing beneath the trees with baskets ready to receive the fruit. And all over the highway were scattered little green leaves and broken twigs and cherry-stones. Sometimes as we were passing by these fruit-gatherers, they would throw handfuls of the luscious fruit down into the car; and in places, splashes of juice had stained the wind-screen in little drops that looked like red ink.

Leipzig was gaily decorated as we passed through. The city of music had on a festive air. The streets were waving with banners and long pennants; the buildings were brightly dressed in bunting and evergreen; and from a hundred flag-poles huge flags fluttered in the breeze. The city was celebrating the five-hundredth anniversary of its university. One could not help wondering what the aspect of the place must have been in the year 1813, when the allied armies defeated the great Napoleon there and put the French to flight.

We did not linger long, however, for we were pressing on with all speed possible toward Berlin. A long afternoon's run was ahead of us, and we wished to enter the capital while it was still daylight. In spite



Rome: The Colosseum



of our haste, however, in spite of the excellent roads, we did not succeed in reaching our intended destination. An untoward event compelled us to change our plans. Fate, in the shape of a "blow-out," intervened, and necessitated a change of tire. The mishap occurred just after leaving Bitterdorf, a town situated several miles beyond Leipzig. We were forced to waste two valuable hours while a refractory "pneu" was fitted into place. During the process of re-tireing, many peasants from the near-by fields left their hay-making and came and looked on with interest-laden eyes at an operation that was evidently new to them. When at length we got away, the possibility of reaching Berlin was out of the question. Potsdam, therefore, was decided upon as the town at which to pass the night.

Potsdam itself is a delightful place. It is noted for its palaces. It has been called the "Versailles of Prussia." The favourite residence of the German Emperor is situated there, and almost nine months out of the year the town is gay with the presence of the court. Of all its beautiful palaces, Sans-Souci—a charming summer-house which stands at the

top of a long flight of steps, overlooking a terraced garden—is the most interesting. The building is closely connected with the lives of Frederick the Great and of Voltaire, and has been the setting of more than one historical anecdote. Among other interesting stories told of the great monarch, is one recalled by the sight of two dogs' gravestones which lie at the opposite side of the terrace, separate from the plot of ground in which his other dogs and horse are buried. One day, when the Emperor was about to take his customary cup of chocolate, he noticed a spider floating on the surface of the liquid. Instead of drinking, he gave it to his dogs and looked on as two of them lapped it up greedily. To his amazement, a few minutes later he saw both animals drop dead at his feet. It was afterwards discovered that the chocolate had been poisoned by a French cook.

We thanked the puncture for having compelled us to stop at Potsdam; and then in the afternoon of the following day continued on to Berlin.

CHAPTER III

ACROSS GERMANY

FROM Berlin to Dresden is a day's run.

Both in the morning and in the afternoon the road leads a delightful drive through a vast flat country. It takes one into a hay-field district, where the fields are broad and far-reaching, and where the whole countryside in August looks a mass of yellow; and shows one peasants working in among the colour, cutting down the hay and stacking it in long, straight rows across the fields.

Once where the land is very low and flat it traverses a windmill region. The great flapping mills suggest a Holland landscape; but the mills themselves are not as picturesque as those of the Netherlands.

Many small villages lie on the route. Like most of the out-of-the-way German hamlets, they are dirty and uninteresting. Their streets are narrow and badly cobbled, with

grass and weeds growing between the stones, and down the gutters dirty water runs in little streams to the ponds which are the delight of many ducks.

Huge, sullen oxen yoked to hay-carts block the narrow ways and stand passively indifferent when the motor comes upon them from behind. They have long fringes hanging over their eyes, and these, as they move or walk, brush away the insects that buzz about their heads in hundreds.

The houses are ramshackle and irregular: lath and plaster walls support gabled roofs; tumble-down chimneys emit wreaths of smoke; uncurtained windows let in the light through dusty panes; and the eaves, which are in places half overgrown with moss and filled with the last storm's raindrops, look as if they are about to break from their fastenings and fall to the ground in rotten fragments.

Often the highway cuts its way through dense pine forests, where the smell of the woods is breathed out everywhere. They are cool, damp drives, for the road pierces the very heart of the pines. On either side, the trees rise up in dense array, like millions of gigantic needles stuck endwise into the ground.



Rome: The Appian Way

Far in front and far behind only two square cuts against the sky show where the highway dives into the wood and out again. There is always a breathless stillness: never a bird sings among the branches. A lonely atmosphere pervades the blacker backgrounds, an atmosphere which suggests the wolf lurking in the forest labyrinths in winter.

Occasionally poor old women gather twigs and brushwood a few yards in from the roadway. They are pathetic, care-worn figures, with backs bent double from a life of stooping, and arms grown long from searching after fallen branches. Sometimes they wave as the motor whirls past, or stand a moment to gaze at the swiftly vanishing car. They are pleased if one takes notice of them: over their wrinkled faces faint smiles will flicker and their eyes light up at the pleasure of an unexpected salutation. These faggot-gatherers are the only living objects that break the oppressive loneliness of the forests.

Then out into the open the road leads on—out into a sun-kissed landscape which is all warm and bright, with blue, blue sky above, and maize-coloured fields around; out past August acres where reapers work among the

hay, as they swing their scythes deep into the yellow grass; out past tan-and-white oxen that make laborious progress along the highway, past juice-stained cherry-pickers embowered in trees, past frightened hens and startled geese; another swift flight through level land; another drive through a damp forest; another long-drawn avenue of trees; then Dresden.

The capital of Saxony is a spacious city. Many imposing buildings line the streets, handsome statues adorn the squares, and the royal palace lends its dignity to the appearance of the place. A beautiful park, which is situated in the heart of the town, makes a charming place in which to drive, and is to Dresden what the Thiergarten is to Berlin, or the Bois de Boulogne to Paris. A stirring history heightens one's interest in the city. Several times ravaged, several times captured, it has had its share of misfortunes during the Seven Years' War, and the Campaign of 1813. In this latter year it was the scene of the celebrated victory of the French over the combined armies of the Austrians, the Prussians, and the Russians.

When we left Dresden the car's bonnet was turned on a backward run to the Rhine. Already the desire to be out again in the open had taken hold of us, and after a short stay in the Saxon capital we were quite willing to forsake the city streets for country highways. If one prolongs the visit and spends several days in sight-seeing, one misses the usual morning runs through dew-damp fields and over dustless roads. So when we mounted the motor, heard the purring of the engine awaiting the start, and felt the car glide silently away from the hotel entrance-steps, a feeling of pleasure took hold of us at the thought of having once again the country given back to us.

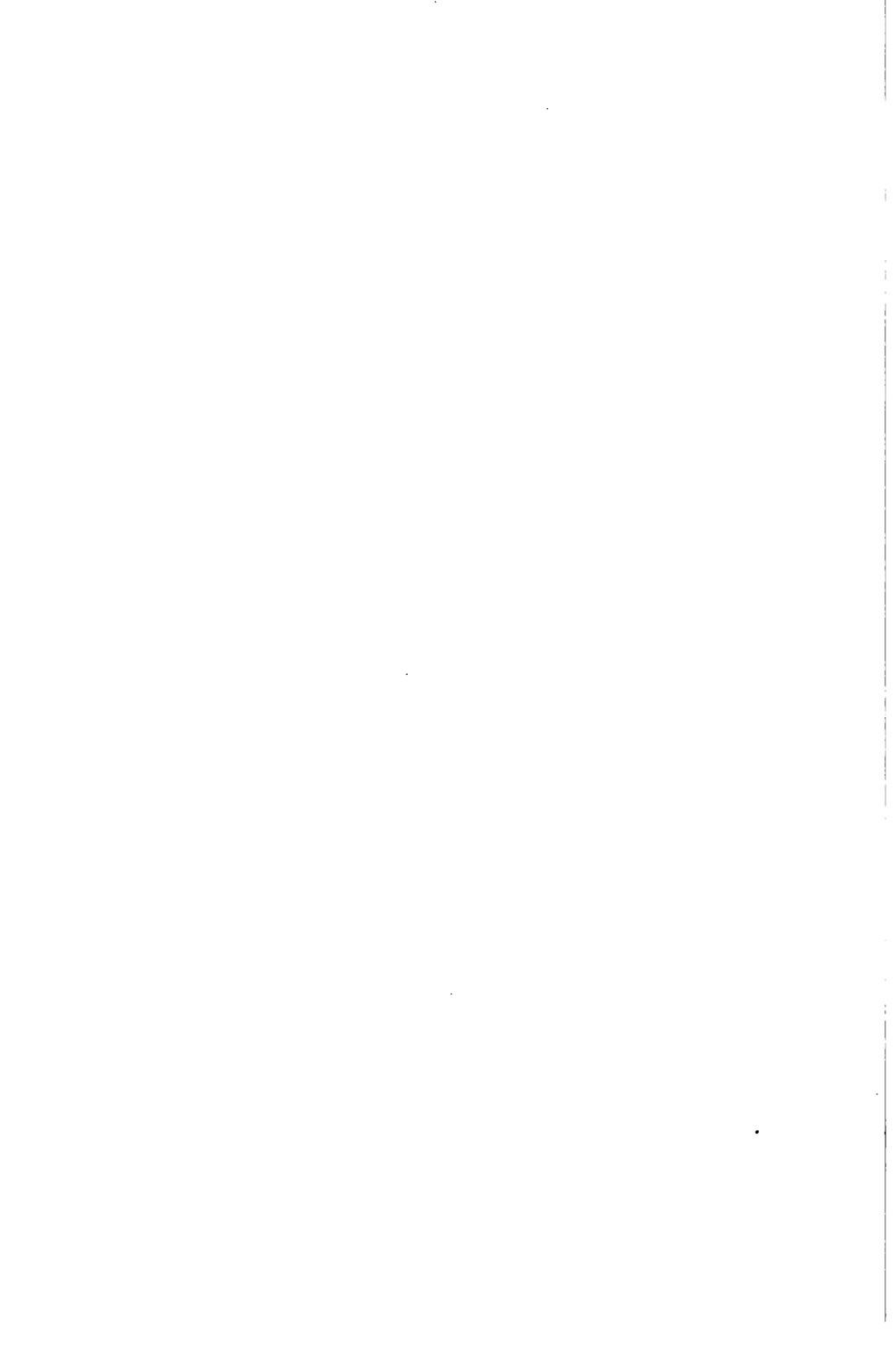
As soon as Dresden is left behind the topography of the country changes. There is a marked difference in the aspect of the landscape. Instead of the hayfields and open reaches, which are characteristic of the district between Berlin and Dresden, broken acres meet the eye. No longer is the road a straight strip sweeping an unswerving course across the fields: a constantly undulating ribbon marks the highway as it dips its way from village to village.

Always from the tops of this surging country splendid vistas of the endless landscape can be obtained. Always one can see the slanting fields, the pine forests, and the nestling villages. The dark, green patches on the hillsides show where the woods lie; and these stretches contrast in beautiful colour harmonies with the yellow hayfields and the red roof-topped hamlets.

The villages are usually situated between the slopes. They are placed deep down in the valleys where they are sheltered from the wind-storms of winter. Seen from the rising land, they show collections of painted roofs glittering in the sun, with many chimney-stacks emitting puffs of smoke, and one or two church spires sharply outlined against the green background. There are many of these hamlets in this part of the country. Every field seems to have been stripped in order to make up these tiny places. One misses the flower-embowered cottages of the English landscape. It would be a pleasure to see a happy little home delighting in its trim garden in front, its clean barn-yard in the rear, and all around its prosperous acres running out to meet similar neighbouring fields.



Pisa: The Baptistry, Cathedral, and Leaning Tower



The loneliness of the open would be broken. As it is, nothing but the half-hill-hidden villages give sign of habitation; no cattle in the pastures to clip the grass; no people along the highway with whom to exchange a passing word; no stately house to relieve the monotony: only a wide expanse of country which breaks and falls away, which surges and recedes to the horizon.

All day we sped through this deserted region. Only here and there did we stop for a moment in a larger village where an imposing church or an interesting building presented itself. For a few seconds, perhaps, we would leave the car in some shady square and rest ourselves in sight-seeing. It was never for a long space of time, however, as the fascination of the road was upon us; and we pushed on, preferring the wide views of the unfolding country to the few attractions of the small towns.

One of these hamlets was especially pretty. Built on a commanding position, with its tiny houses clustering at the foot of a towering castle, it looked the very essence of picturesqueness. It seemed asleep—as if deadened under the weight of the centuries: not a soul

was abroad, not a dog barked, not a sound broke the stillness.

For us it was a day of disaster. One mishap followed another in quick succession, until, by the end of the afternoon, we were able to count among other misfortunes, two punctured tires and the collapse of the trunks from the grill behind the car.

The first tire had burst just at midday when the sun was its hottest and the road its dustiest and hottest, too. It had meant half an hour's labour in the noonday heat, surrounded by inquisitive children and yapping dogs. The event had occurred just at the outskirts of a village, and the whole neighbourhood had quickly gathered to watch the operation of fitting another "pneu" into place. Suggestions from the onlookers—always superfluous at such a time—were the only assistance offered; and no one seemed to understand why we persisted in carrying out our own methods. But what had proved an annoyance to us was an unlooked-for source of amusement to the urchins. They took prompt possession of the discarded tire and rolled it off in triumph down the highway, yelling as they went, and accompanied by an

unmusical chorus of excited dogs. They disappeared in a cloud of dust, and a few minutes later we had started on our way again.

The second mishap occurred when the trunks crashed to the ground from behind. We had driven over a series of bad ruts at the top of a sharp hill and were commencing the winding descent when a loud bump and an unusual scraping noise on the road attracted our attention. Stopping the car, we hastily alighted to find out what was the trouble. A few yards behind, the trunks lay on the side of the road. They were still in the rain-proof outer case, and neither had suffered much from the sudden fall, although several locks and fastenings had been dragged off, and the covering itself a trifle battered. The chain of the rack had given way. It had not been sufficiently strong to support the luggage and withstand the shock of the ruts at the same time. However, by means of wire and straps, the damage was temporarily repaired, and for the second time we took up our interrupted journey, hoping to have no more such annoying occurrences.

But events, especially unwelcome ones, never seem to come singly. Another puncture

when it was already growing dusk and when the road ahead had to be discerned by aid of acetylene lamps, necessitated a last stop before reaching Bayreuth. We arrived late in the town. Lights were already glimmering in the windows, and the streets, in spite of feeble gas lamps, looked gay. Many people were out. An air of animation hung about the place. Cafés, filled to overflowing, were doing a brisk evening trade, and all along the edge of the sidewalks, round tables held the glasses of those who had ordered beer.

In spite of this unusual movement, the place did not look imposing. The main street added nothing to our expectations. The inn, too, had an uninviting appearance—an unpretentious building with a deep coach entrance burrowing its way to the stables. From its aspect it would have been judged any rate but first rate. We were assured, however, that there was no better in the place. So we determined to try it for the night. For the moment it was deserted, the proprietor explained; all the guests had gone to the opera; but almost every room had been engaged months ahead, and the building was filled to overcrowding. Such was the case



Pisa: The Leaning Tower

with every boarding-house and hotel; it was an impossibility to find accommodation anywhere. We learned that the Wagnerian operas were being enacted in the town; and since they are only given every second year, many visitors had come from all parts of the world to hear the magic music of the great composer.

In the morning we went through the old-fashioned opera-house, which was built for Wagner by Ludwig, the mad king of Bavaria. The interior is elaborately decorated, but in spite of its over-much ornamentation, is too out of date to appeal to modern theatre-goers. We then walked down some narrow side streets and came upon an interesting old church which was formerly the burying-place of the Margraves of Bayreuth. We descended into the damp crypt where many of the dust-covered coffins of that family were viewed by the aid of flickering candles, and tried to make out each one's history from a guide who could speak nothing more than German. We came away with a confused knowledge of men who had lived centuries ago, some of whom had been, no doubt, all in all to their little town.

We left Bayreuth in the afternoon. Nothing of particular interest compelled us to remain. It was impossible to secure stalls at the opera: every seat had been engaged months in advance of the season.

A similar road brought us to Nürnberg. The same ups and downs showed that the topography of the country had not changed. The same rolling fields, dark forest patches on the slopes, and the same villages were passed through on the route.

Nürnberg is one of the most picturesque of German cities. It is a mediæval looking place whose fortified walls and massive gateways still lend an old time appearance. It gives the impression of being a toy town rather than a busy modern centre. In the more ancient portions, where the streets are still narrow and crooked, quaint houses overhang the roadways in projecting storeys. But beyond its seventy-four flanking towers, the newer portion of the city is laid out in wide streets and handsome squares, adorned with monuments and statues; and many imposing buildings mark a change of architecture from the ramshackle dwellings within the walls.

The city has an interesting history.

Shortly after the time of Charlemagne its inhabitants were converted to Christianity, and the place was among the first in Germany to embrace the faith. At a later date, in about 1390, note-paper was invented here, while, in 1500, watches were first shown to an astonished world.

From this historic spot, we pressed on an unknown course through a flatter district, arriving, when it was quite twilight, at one of the most inhospitable-looking villages which was to be our halting-place for the night.

Our arrival and subsequent stop—enforced on account of the hour and the lack of larger towns ahead—was evidently a wonderful event in the small community. That a motoring party should choose their little hamlet at which to spend the night seemed a most extraordinary happening to the villagers. The principal inn—like most of its kind in isolated German towns—looked most uninviting, and a further acquaintance with the building did not give us promise of a comfortable rest. It was a dimly lit place, with draughty corridors and tiny bedrooms, low-ceiled passageways and a rickety staircase. But we were assured that everything would

be done to give us satisfaction. In the inn itself all was commotion. The proprietor, poor man, dashed hither and thither from room to room, explaining the advantages of each to an accompaniment of many gesticulations, and finally ushered us into what he stated was the most comfortable of all. It was splendidly situated on a corner of the main street, he pointed out—a questionable advantage, we thought, as the thoroughfare was likely to be noisy in the early morning. There was a piano at which we could amuse ourselves in the evening, and at the table in the centre dinner could be served. This would save us the trouble of descending to the dining-room, he said.

In the morning, after we had complimented the obliging host for his attentions, we left him at his inn door, bowing and smiling and wishing us the most pleasant run possible to Baden-Baden.

The day was glorious. An August sun streamed hot over the land and bathed the country in a simmering heat-haze. The pale blue sky was cloudless. A soft breeze tempered the atmosphere and rustled through the woods, gently stirring the leaves.

Along the Riviera



A short distance before Hall one comes suddenly upon a magnificent view. From the roadside the land falls away to a valley in steeply descending leaps. Below, far below, a little town finds place—a collection of whitewashed houses that hold up gleaming red roofs to the sun. Through the valley a stream threads its way as it keeps company with the thin white ribbon road. It traverses the town under a bridge or two and, losing itself later on, winds away behind the hills.

We had several of these superb vistas of the open country from the tops of the rises and once or twice we stopped to more fully enjoy the beauty of the landscape. The sun shone hot upon the hayfields all day long. The bronzed reapers and hay-makers were taking advantage of the spell of good weather and were working with a will to accomplish much while there was no rain. Hour after hour we passed hay-carts heaped high with hay; and the great wheels of the creaking waggons rumbled along the highway as the oxen moved forward in slow and even progress.

The road still dived into quaint out-of-the-way towns, where the houses were ramshackle and irregular and where the people

were hardworking and industrious; past open doorways where children played in company with dogs and hens and geese; over badly cobbled streets where the ruts were many and the smooth places few, where great cumbersome waggons blocked the narrow ways, and where oxen drank out of the public water-troughs.

Two interesting towns lay on the route. Both were picturesque places, with one or two handsome buildings and striking churches. The one was Hall; the other Heilbronn.

The former is the quainter of the two. It is a steep place with a high-placed church overlooking a square. A long flight of steps which springs from the pavement in an almost perpendicular climb to the very doors, leads up to the church; and if one takes the trouble to mount these, a picturesque view of the town and of the surrounding country can be got. In the square, quite near to the steps, a curious fountain splashes water into an elaborately carved basin, where Gothic curves and carved stonework pattern the whole fountain-trough in intricate designs.

Heilbronn, the latter town, also boasts of an interesting church. It is a much more beautiful building, with its entrance-door and

its tall spire springing far above the roof-tops, than the one at Hall; but it has not the picturesque placing of the latter church, nor does it show to advantage, crowded upon, as it is, by neighbouring houses. Both of the places are typical of the older German towns, both are as quaint as they are pretty.

After lunch at the latter we again pressed on over roads that were excellent for by-ways and through a country which increased in loveliness the farther we progressed. The climax of the run was the distance between Pforzheim and Baden-Baden. The road wound through the Black Forest in breathless ups and downs, mounting over the hills in a serpentine fashion as it forced a passage between the pines. After the warm run through a sunny country, it was a deliciously cool drive. The woods were moist and damp in a freshness that was a welcome change from the hot breezes of the open. Instead of the sweet, heavy scent of the hayfields one breathed the aromatic fragrance of the pines. From the hills, the country could be seen rolling back in green surges, the forests scarred here and there where the wood-man had been at work with his destroying axe; and in the valleys the little villages

nestled in peaceful security, surrounded by their emerald fields and watered by tiny streams.

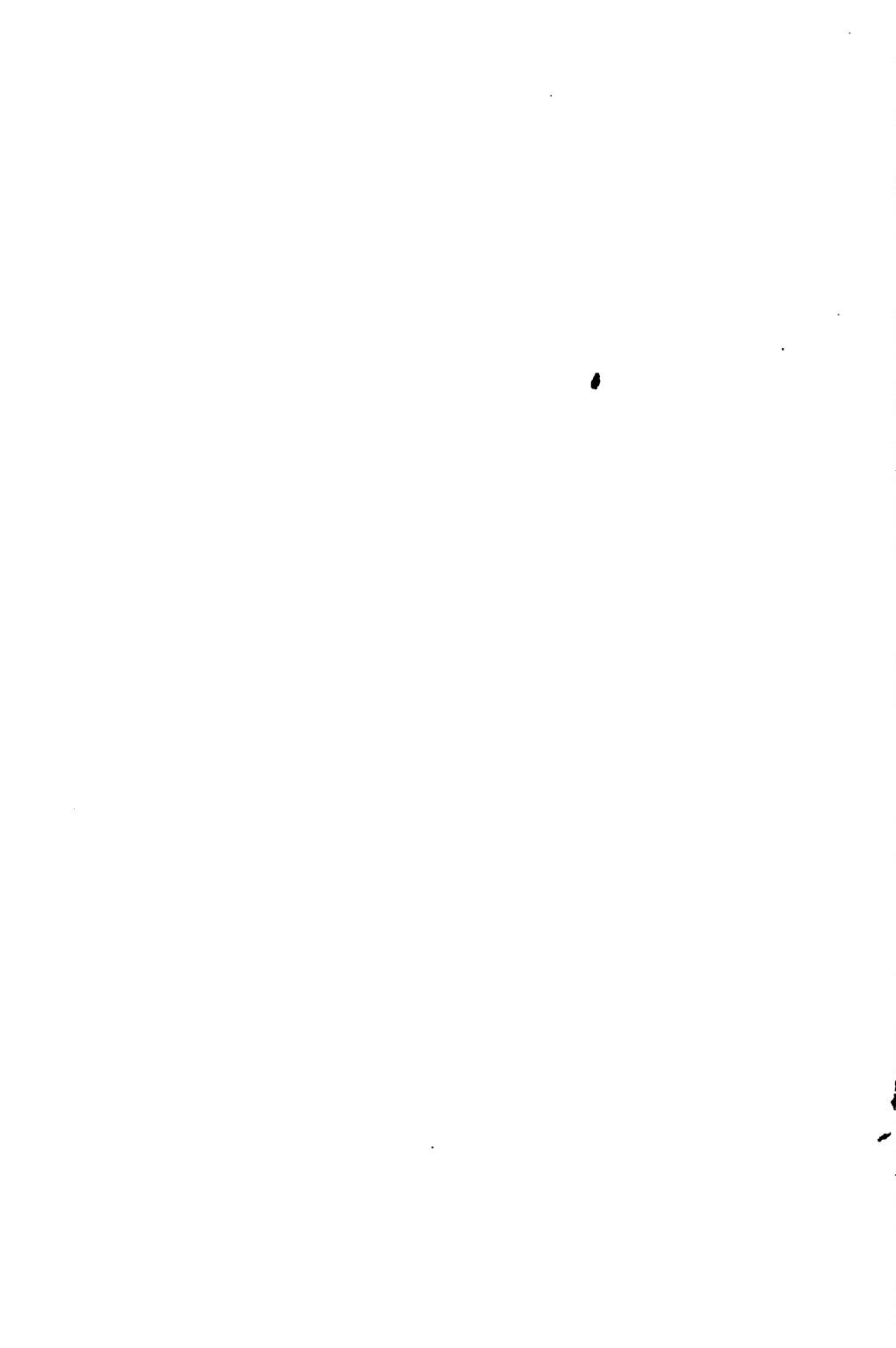
Then, after the mountainous run, Baden-Baden came as a relief. We descended into it by a long, steep hill and reached it after a slow drive past many ox-drawn hay-carts.

The city is one of the most charming of health-resorts. Not only on account of its situation is it beautiful, but its many parks and open places make it among the prettiest of German watering places. Hotels are everywhere: large and small, magnificent and unpretentious, they crowd upon each other in dense array like the trees of a pine forest struggling for space upon a mountainside. They are typical buildings with small balconies, striped awnings, and white walls. Every one who visits the city sips of the water which gushes in a never-failing supply of bubbles and steam from the pipe in the centre of the Kursaal. When the season is on one can go early and see crowds of people walking about, drinking the hot liquid—some doing so for amusement, others really trying to benefit by it as much as possible.

When we left this interesting health-resort



Nice: The Promenade des Anglais



we made our way to Strassburg through a lovely landscape, where the strips of vineyards between the roadway and the near-by hills were rich in promise of a fruitful vintage, and where the hayfields were already cut, and in which the gleaners were busy gathering up the final straws.

From the country, as Strassburg is approached, the great cathedral spire can be seen, soaring into the heavens, standing outlined a slender point against the sky. It is lost for a while as the road merges into the city streets. The houses rise up in the immediate foreground and shut it out. But suddenly, as one turns from off the main street into a side roadway, the whole splendid western front, forming a barricade of stone-carving at the opposite end of the thoroughfare, breaks upon the eye, and one again catches sight of the same soaring tower which was seen from the country. It rises above the surrounding buildings to a lofty height, shooting upward a bewildering mass of sculptured stone. Standing beneath it, it gives an impression of tremendous height, and one instinctively compares it with the people who walk about the cathedral steps.

We left later on with the image of the splendid building imprinted indelibly on our memories—of the one complete soaring spire, of the other, the unfulfilment of what it was intended to be; of the shadowy nave and transepts, and of the numerous springing buttresses.

CHAPTER IV

OVER THE ALPS INTO ITALY

FROM Strassburg the road leads one through interesting Alsacian country. To the right the broad acres roll back to the distant Vosges Mountains in great undulating reaches of hayfield and vineyard, terminating finally in the steep hills which outline themselves in rounded lines against the sky. Once or twice the highway skirts close to their bases; and one follows the foothills for long stretches through grape-grown acres and past half-cut hayfields. When the sun shines strongly over the country, the distances are veiled in a simmering heat-haze. The peasants in the field look sun-burned and weary; and the oxen drag the creaking carts along the highway with tired hoofs.

We left Germany and took in exchange the fertile country of France when we crossed the

border at La Chapelle. It was but a short run from the dividing line to Belfort, the town at which we were to stop for the night, and as the road was excellent, we soon found ourselves advancing upon our appointed destination.

Belfort is an interesting frontier town. A military air envelops the place which makes it gay in spite of its gloomy fortifications. Situated near to the border, it has seen the varying fortunes of war and has been besieged more than once during different campaigns. It sustained a siege against the Germans in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and made a gallant resistance against the attacks of the enemy.

A great many soldiers are stationed there—picturesque French soldiers with brick-red trousers and blue coats and oddly-shaped caps and swords, whose uniform is conspicuously different from those German soldiers just across the dividing line whom we often saw marching their dusty way along a sun-baked road. They have blue coats, too; but they wear light-grey pants—grey once—and helmets.

Early on Monday morning, when half the



A View of the Corniche de l'Esterel



population was still abed, we left Belfort and consigned it to the care of its military occupants. We had a long day's run to look forward to, for we wished to reach Lyons before the evening.

At first we lost the right road and took instead a poor *Chemin de Grande Communication*. This latter, however, took us through Montbéliard, where the ancient château of the Counts of Montbéliard still frowns down upon the little town, and gave us many glimpses of rural life behind the scenes, so we did not regret the mistake very much. When coming upon the right road again, we fell in with the river Doubs and kept companionship with it for some time.

It was a very pretty river as it wound its way in graceful loops across the country. It ran a willow-fringed course, for on either side green rushes screened the banks and choked the water which slipped about their roots in gentle current.

Baume-les-Dames and Besançon lay on the route. They were picturesquely situated places but held out no special inducements to compel a halt. In the former many soldiers were waiting in a square, with knapsacks on

their backs and rifles picketed in long lines across the roadways. The whole town was out to have a last chat and to bid them adieu, before they started on their long tramp. Nearly every man was surrounded by a group of relations, each one of whom was endeavouring to bestow the most attention.

Besançon, with its splendid fort crowning the entrance to the town, was another place with a military air, for here, too, soldiers were walking about the streets and lounging in the different squares.

All day the road took us through a fruitful country, where vineyards covered the hills and lesser slopes, and where the hayfields were all but cut and stacked; where little villages nestled far away on the hillsides and where neat farms dotted the meadows.

We lunched at Arbois—a very insignificant town, half lost in an engulfing sea of vineyards—at a queer little hotel, where a neat French maid tried her best to speak English, and where we, in our turn, endeavoured to air our best French; and then we passed on with Lyons in the mind's eye.

The afternoon's run was a glorious sequel to that of the morning. All along the route

there were mountains to the left of us—soft vineyard-clothed mountains that broke against the sky in rounded lines; while to the right, the country swept away in the low-lying land that terminated once again in distant hills.

The road was for ever one long white ribbon. Now rising where the ground steepened, now falling into the shallow slopes, it stretched across country in an unending strip. Often it led through avenues of tall poplars; and as one slipped over its smooth surface one could see far ahead the tops of the lanky trees cutting a V with the sky. When the sun sank low, thin shadows fell across the highway in grey-black bands, making it appear one long strip of barred shade.

Cows with tinkling bells tied around their necks moved aimlessly across the roadways; chickens, all out of breath by reason of vain cackling, sought the shelter of barn doors; dogs with deepening growls sprang forward with unfriendly greeting; cats that dozed on the window-sills lifted tired eyes as the car flashed by; and the people—the peasant men and women who laboured in the hot August fields—rested for a moment

from their work to respond to our hurried greetings.

The sun was sinking as we descended into Lyons. It lighted up the many windows, making them blaze like fire. It gave life to the rivers, sparkling through their waters in golden shades. It streamed over the roof-tops in a soft warmth, and suffused the whole city in a ruddy glow.

We left Grenoble with great anticipations for the day's run. We knew that before the evening came France would have wished us *au revoir* and Italy have welcomed us. But we were a little dubious of the great Mont Cenis pass. It was not by this route that we had planned to enter Italy; we had chosen the more direct and less mountainous way via Briançon. Certain happenings during the night had compelled us to change our minds and go the longer way. Part of the mountainside had caved in on the Briançon road, thereby stopping all traffic for more than three or four days. It would have been a great waste of time had we waited at Grenoble until passage into Italy was again permitted by this route. So we



The Corniche de l'Esterel



started in the morning, a little dubious of Mont Cenis.

All morning we got no taste of hill-climbing. The road ran between the mountains, skirting close to their bases, but never mounting with any perceptive climb. It led through a smiling valley where the hay was cut and piled in great pear-shaped stacks across the fields and where the tall, slender poplars shot up in scattered clumps, and continued for a long while in arrow-flights through the level plain.

On either side huge mountains rose up and hemmed in the valley and its thread-like road by an unsurmountable wall of stone. On the left lay the bleak cloud-girt, Grande Chartreuse range, while to the right, the softer Belledonne chain lifted greener slopes to the sun.

Later on the road joined the Arc and kept company with that furious river until late in the afternoon. Always skirting its banks within a few feet of the water, or crossing it here and there to lengthen out again along its other side, the highway led on from grander scenery to grander scenery, until one was almost overwhelmed by the stupendous views

of peak and mountain that pressed upon the sight hour after hour without ceasing. But it is only when Modane has been passed that the Alps begin to make themselves felt. All day till then the climb is imperceptible: the road has slanted up the valleys in gradual rises. Then comes a change. The mountains close together and form impassable barriers of stone; the peaks are less far off, less out of reach than in the morning; and the whole landscape is one vast sea of mountain-tops which lift snow-capped summits above the clouds.

After Lanslebourg the climax is reached. The road leaves France and mounts into Italy. It climbs up and over the mountains in a thrillingly steep drive, zigzagging its way in breathless loops from the foot to the very summit. All the way up the most stupendous of views are given. Everywhere—to the north, south, east, and west—mountain peaks break upon the eye, leaping and tossing like the billows of a frenzied ocean in their efforts to reach beyond the clouds and pierce the sky above. On all sides are ice-bound fastnesses and inaccessible places, yawning chasms and awful gorges; lower down, needle-like trees

and stunted shrubs; and lower still, far in the valley—a dizzy drop—where the furious Arc looks no larger than a thin white thread and the road no wider than a cobweb strand, the tiny villages show toy houses against the valley background.

Then after the summit has been reached, after France has been left behind and Italy taken in exchange, one comes quite unexpectedly upon the little lake of Mont Cenis. It seems to be an after-climax to the day's run. It lies surrounded by the mountains, and all day long reflects the sky in deep blue tones.

The descent into Italy—it is a leap from the clouds to earth. All the way down there is the same tossing sea of mountains, the same sheer drops to the distant valley, the same awful awe-inspiring gorges, and the same serpentine road.

It is with a sense of relief that one at last finds oneself in the valley. The continuous climbing in the mountains almost overpowers one. The straight highway in front offers an avenue of escape, and one takes it and runs quickly.

We approached Turin through a darkening landscape. The farther fields were lost in

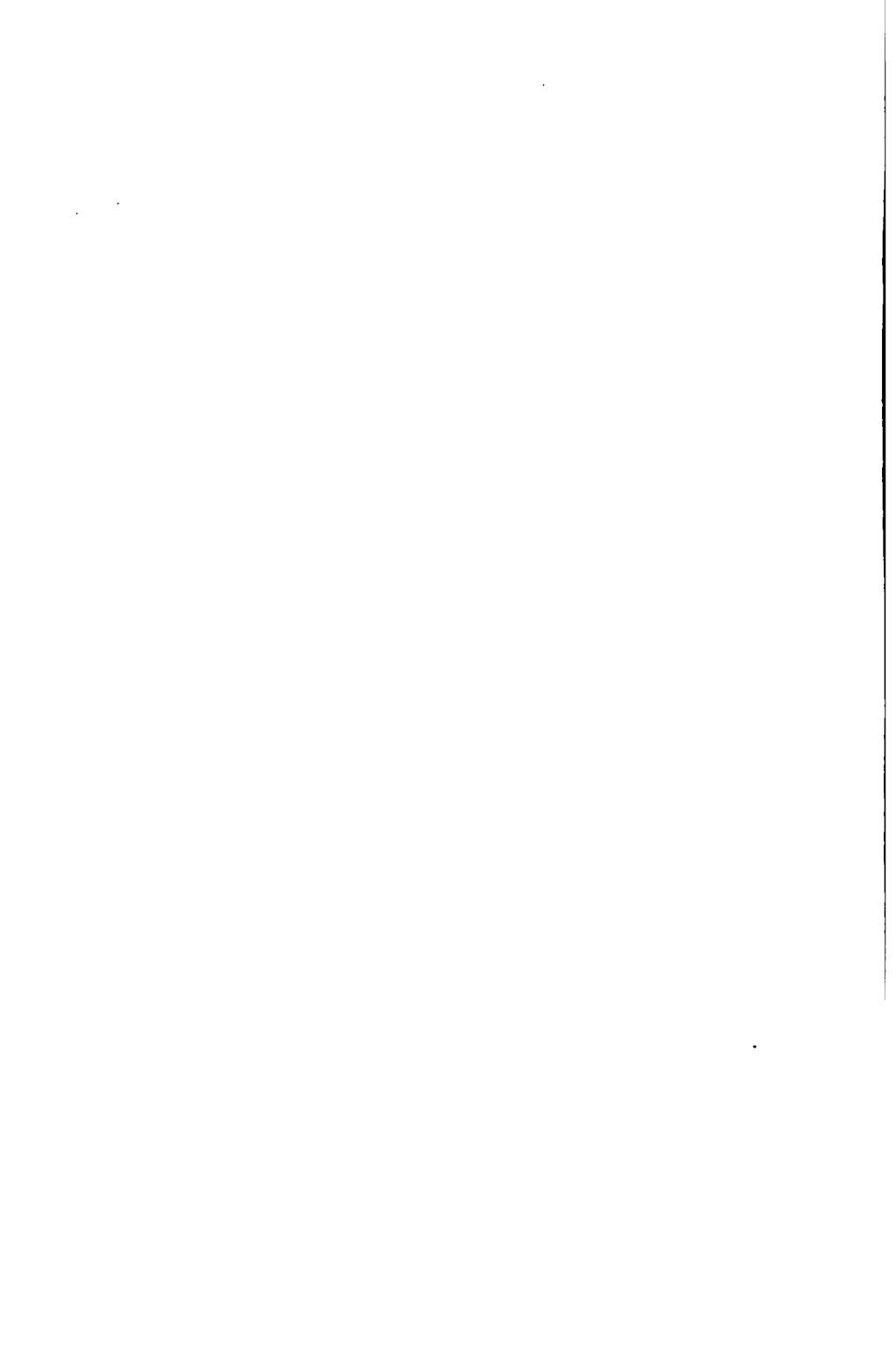
twilight and the road stretched ahead in a narrow blur of white. The little villages that we passed through—the filthy villages with their streets running in muddy water, their houses dirty and unhospitable, and their people dark-eyed and swarthy—were already beginning to show lighted windows to the darkness.

Turin is a typically Italian city. Many of its streets are narrow and unsidewalked, paved with great square flags which render the roadways as uneven as noisy, and are lined on either side by arcaded buildings. Behind, in the shelter of the loggias, the different shop-windows display their goods of bright Italian scarfs, antiques, and varied religious trinkets whose number is legion. The Po wanders into the city and out again over a half-dried river bed, making its way under several bridges before it regains the open. It is an interesting city, with several palaces and many handsome buildings, and is one of the largest of the northern Italian centres.

We left Turin in the morning, intending to reach Milan some time in the afternoon. By road the distance between the two cities is some hundred and five miles.



Avignon: The Palace of the Popes



For the entire run, the highway led us through a flat district, with only the Alps in the hazy distance to remind us of the stupendous climbs of the day before. The surface was poor, and travelling was rendered rather slow by reason of the many ruts.

The towns through which we passed were unmistakably Italian. They were dirty places, mostly, with loggiaed and stuccoed houses. Down the centres of the streets, the gutters ran with dirty water; but we found these useful sometimes to cool off the tires.

The people whom we passed on the road-sides were dark and swarthy—passionate men and women with olive skin and brown-black eyes. The children looked like the children one sees on the canvases of the Italian masters.

Mules swarmed upon the highway. Singly, in twos or threes, they drew the loaded carts along the dusty roads; and each wore the same jaded expression. Those that were to be considered lucky beasts had fringes hanging from their harnesses for the purpose of brushing off the swarms of flies that always buzzed about. The luckless mules went without these trappings and suffered in silence.

The road stretched out in long straight lines across the country. In front one could see nothing but the endless strip; behind there was nothing but a cloud of smoke. The dust lay inches thick and covered the bushes along the roadside in a white powder, turning the leaves from glossy green to dull grey.

The day was hot. In the distances the simmering heat-haze veiled the landscape. The sun streamed on the stucco houses and on the red-tiled roofs. It beat down upon the earth in a strong glare. And the sky was wonderfully blue—an Italian sky—a vast blue infinity which looked like a great dome.

At Milan, one at once goes out in search of the cathedral. One comes upon it first when it springs unexpectedly from behind a corner. The building looks exquisitely beautiful as the sun streams over its white marble and pierces through the wonderful frettings of the roof. It appears rather more like a great work in lace than an edifice in stone, for the carvings and traceries are so delicately light and airy that they give the impression of having been worked out with needle and thread rather than with the hammer and chisel.

One finds the interior scarcely less wonderful. Although it has nothing in it of the lightness of the exterior, yet its widespread nave, its soaring pillars, its far withdrawn altar, and above all the soft, dim light which pervades the building, impress one in quite a similar manner.

A priest showed us through the treasury. He made us mount ladders to view the different relics; and the wealth that we saw was priceless. There were gold chalices encrusted with precious stones; huge candlesticks elaborately worked in intricate designs; holy vestments embroidered in pearls and strung with chains of diamonds; crucifixes gleaming with dull rubies and lustrous sapphires; rings and golden books and ivories without number—all priceless treasures hidden away day after day behind locked doors in the little treasury.

The road from Milan to Padua came as a surprise. Its good surface astonished us all the more after the unfavourable comments we had heard regarding the general condition of the Italian highways. It stretched across the country in a long white strip, bending here and there to enter a highway town, then flinging

itself out again as soon as the last house had been left behind.

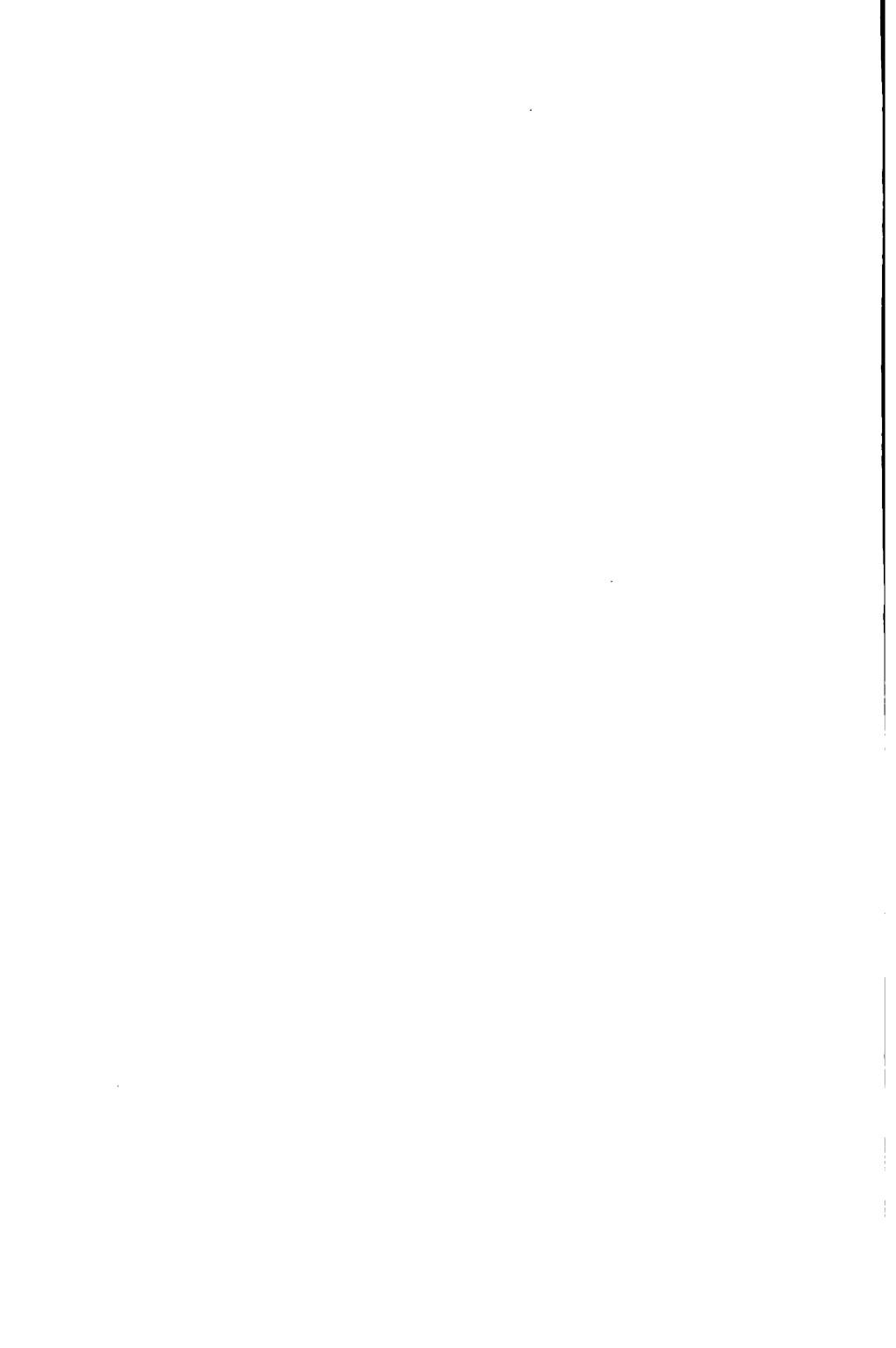
Although the road itself was good, one could have appreciated it the more had it led through an interesting part of the country. There was nothing in the landscape to attract attention. The fields which bordered on the road in dusty stretches looked parched and arid for lack of rain. The trees were withering in the heat and their leaves were turning or had already turned from a bright green to a dull brown. They cast no shade whatsoever on the highway.

The towns, too, were unattractive. They were ugly places, mostly, with dirty streets and dirtier houses. Always they had narrow roadways and tortuous lanes, and all the side streets emptied themselves into the highway which cut its way straight through the heart of the town. The houses, generally painted white, lined the streets in ugly irregularity, their balconies overhanging the sidewalks, and their roofs gleaming red in the sun.

The people looked an uninviting lot. They swarmed through the thoroughfares in dirty clothes and ragged coats, with sullen looks and frowning brows. They were lazy, too, the men



Orange: Triumphal Arch



especially so, for they loafed about the doorways drinking and squabbling from morning till night, and were never more than barely polite if one so much as asked them a question. We scarcely ever saw them that they were not eating. Watermelon was their favourite fruit. Everywhere in the village squares or corners huge slices of this watery fruit were displayed on rickety tables. Always grouped about these were crowds of swarthy Italians eating, some with their faces half lost in the crescent-shaped slices, others biting off mouthfuls from the end of questionable-looking knives; and everywhere on the roadway and in the gutters the black seeds and discarded rinds strewed the ground.

The road leads one through some of the larger cities—Brescia, Verona, and Vincenza. Each is typically Italian in architecture with its arcaded buildings, its loggias, and its narrow thoroughfares. Brescia is picturesquely situated at the foot of rising hills; Verona—Romeo and Juliet's city—on the river Adige, spreads out on either bank; and Vincenza, with its old walls and stout gateways, shows one that once it was a strongly-fortified town. They all have interesting histories, since each

has played an important part in the annals of Northern Italy. Of the three, Brescia and Verona lay claim to most attention. The former has had a turbulent record ever since it became a city of the Venetian Republic in 1426. From that time until 1848, when it was bombarded by the Austrians and taken the following year, it has undergone a series of remarkable sieges. Verona's history, too, reaches far back to ancient times, for the city was founded by the Etruscans and colonised by one of the Cæsars. It came under the control of the Venetians in 1405, and, like Brescia, felt the Austrian influence before finally becoming a city of the Italian kingdom.

Early in the afternoon, after we had driven some few miles beyond Brescia, we came suddenly upon the beautiful Lac de Garde. The blue waters of the lake caught our eyes and riveted them. The shade was so exceptionally bright that it looked rather more like the vivid colouring of a painting than the actual tone of nature. For some little time the road leads close along the shore giving one glimpses of the shallow reeded beach, the wide expanse of blue, the farther shore line, and beyond, in the distance, the rising mountains.

At the end of the lake we approached the little fortified town of Peschiara. We passed over a drawbridge and entered it under a massive gateway. It is a queer little place, for it seems nothing but a series of fortifications, with moats separating different portions of the town; and all around its outer walls the waters of the Lac de Garde run in hurrying current as they flow into the river Mincius.

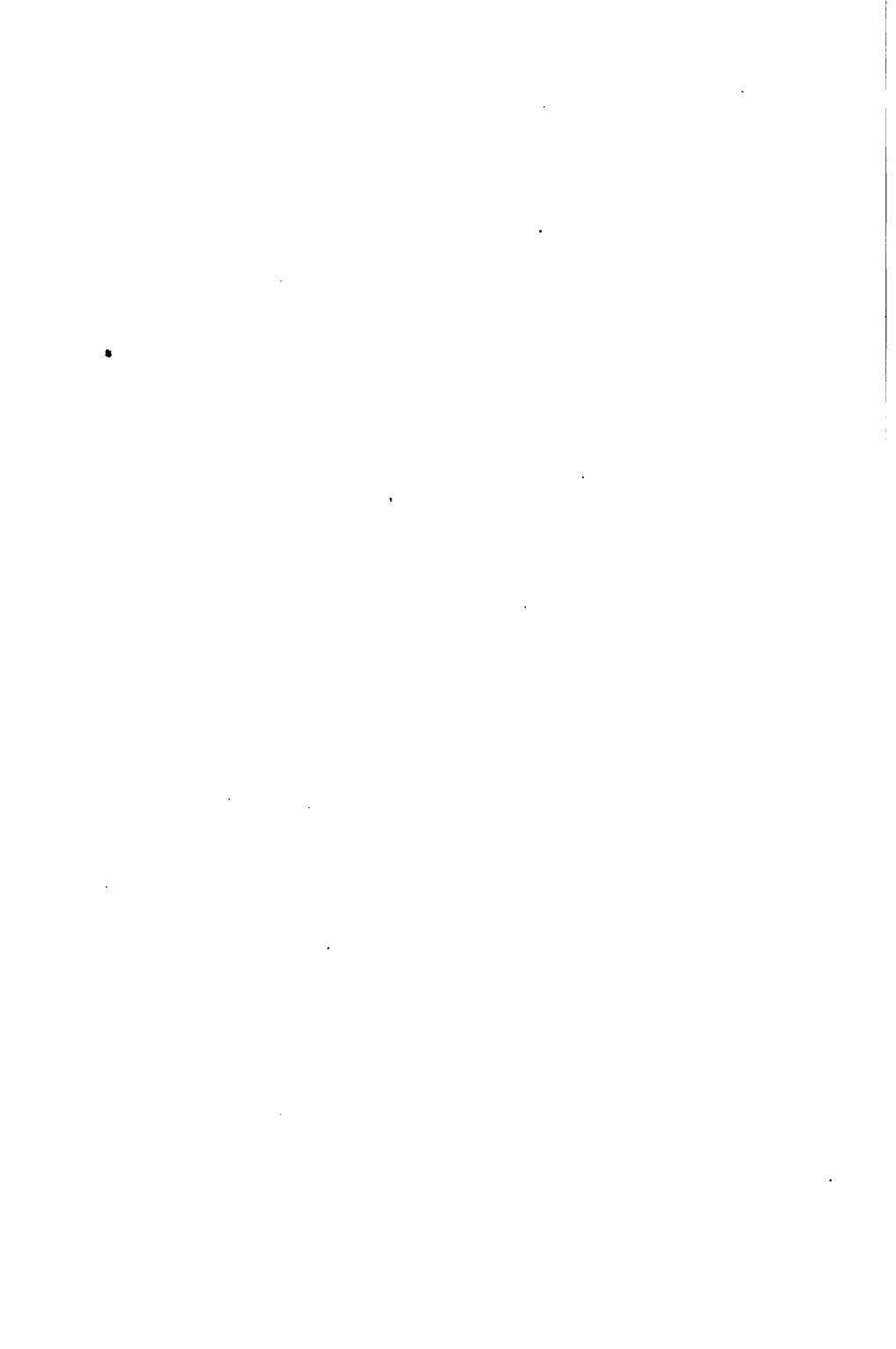
From here on to Padua the country increases in fruitfulness. The soil appears richer and blacker, less parched than in the fields of the morning, and grape-vines and orange trees begin to dot the landscape. The vines, strung in the orchards from tree to tree in graceful festoons, are loaded almost to the ground under the weight of the ripening grapes; and between the trees' leaves, unripe oranges show yellowing rinds to the sun. Sometimes a long, straight line of stately cypresses crowns a sloping knoll, and the trees look like blackened needles as they stand out against the background of the deep, blue sky. They are very sombre-looking trees for they generally mark the spot where a graveyard lies, or surround a patriarchal mausoleum in the grounds of a distant villa.

We came upon Padua quite unexpectedly. Out of a dried-up moat its outer walls had risen up to confront us, and we had crossed a drawbridge and were in the cool of a gatehouse before we realised that it was Padua; and even after we had passed this first barrier and had made a tortuous way down lane-like streets, we came upon a second moat—water-filled this time—a second bridge, a second gate. Beyond this internal line of defence we entered a region of darkened thoroughfares, and were led a difficult progress from square to square until the hotel was reached.

Padua is extremely quaint and old. It is a confused city, with its narrow streets emptying themselves every now and then into open squares, and losing themselves again in tortuous labyrinths as they branch away from these open breathing-spaces. The houses that line the passageways crowd upon each other in dense array. They are quaint buildings with upper stories supported by the arching arcades and windows giving out now and then on to little balconies. Below, in the shadow of the loggias, the lower windows display various articles for sale: crosses and crucifixes and picture postcards if it be an antique shop;



Loches: A Mediæval Gateway



fruit of all descriptions if the place be an apology for a grocery establishment. To add to the picturesqueness of the town, many church domes and minarets rise above the mass of dwellings and outline themselves in clear-cut lines against the sky.

Venice is one of the most charming of cities. So unique, so uncommon, she at once fascinates all who visit her. Her streets are water, her horses gondolas, and her tramways the different steamers that ply from landing stage to landing stage. Besides her originality of position, she has hundreds of treasures to show the visitor in her palaces that line the canals, in her churches that rise from behind old houses, and above all in her magnificent cathedral, which fronts the square in marble loveliness.

Our first glimpse of this wonderful church was unforgettable. It burst upon us suddenly, taking us unawares as we emerged from the gloom of a side street into the open day of the square. The sun was slanting on the western front with all the strength of an August noon, making the mosaics glisten in its light, revealing the rich colours of the marble, and outlin-

ing in bronze the five deep domes against the sky. Farther down, nearer the water, the Doge's Palace sprang upon our eyes, dazzlingly white and pink in the sunlight: white where the pillars and gothic balcony go to support the rooms above; pink where the coloured marble encases the upper walls; and white again where the Moorish decoration caps like a coronet the whole marvellous building. And then the pigeons, the crowds of people, the columns and the winged lion, the gondolas, the blue basin, the outlying ships, the Isle of St. George, and, farther still, the wide lagoons so took hold of us and charmed us that at once we knew the city to be the Venice of our expectations.

Metaphorically speaking, there are two Venices: the Venice of the day and the Venice of the night. The former presents a widely-differing aspect from the latter. It is during the day that crowds throng her narrow streets, that tourists explore the side canals, and that artists are out in abundance to paint the picturesque angles of the less-familiar waterways. It is then that the cathedral and the churches are studied, the palaces with their paintings are visited. Sight-seers throng the

different glass and lace factories, some to buy examples of the fragile blown wares, others to choose specimens of the thread and needle work as mementos of the occasion; and all the various shops that display curios and *objects d'art*, are crowded to their very doors. In short the day-Venice is a piece of prose.

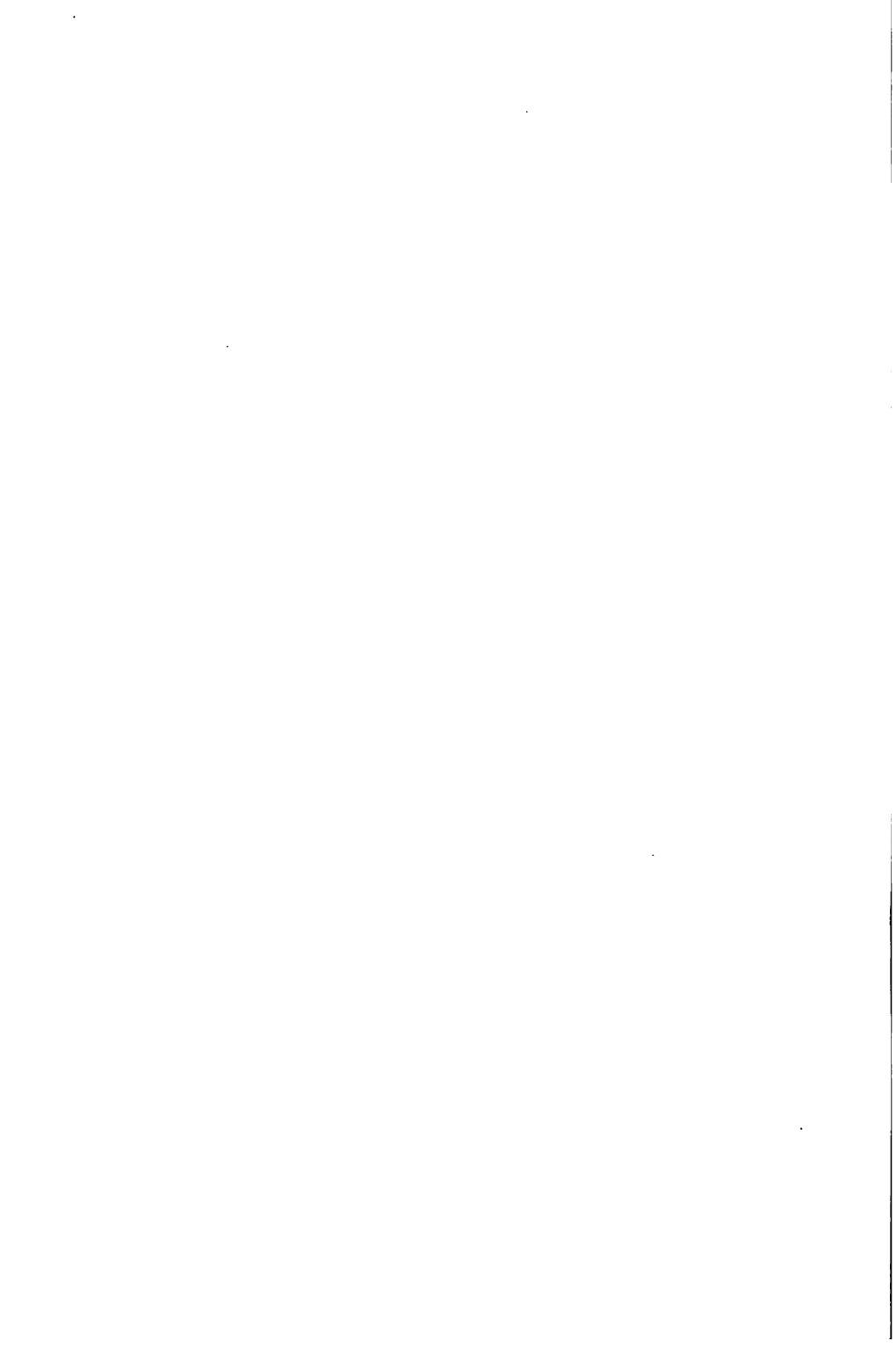
But at night it is entirely different. The city presents a fairy-like appearance. The palaces rise up along the canals in shadowy lines, looking as if they had emerged from the sea, with the water washing about their foundations and lapping gently over their lower entrance-steps. The lagoons are dark and mysterious. On the water—if the night be fine—the voices of serenaders add to the enchantment, for their notes float through the stillness with soft distinctness, inviting all listeners to linger long while the music lasts.

Seen from the water the city is wonderful. A string of diamonds glittering just above the surface of the sea marks the place where it lies. It is a unique picture. The dark water rippling to the Piazzetta's steps; the black gondolas gliding silently by; the creamy palace softly visible; the brilliantly-lighted square; the two columns; the soaring campanile; the

far-withdrawn St. Marks; the music, the laughter, and the coloured lights; the gondoliers' cries; the gentle breezes; and above all the air of gaiety, of enchantment, of unreality make the "Venice of the Night" a piece of poetry, a city which seems not real but half fairy.



The Feudal Château at Langeais



CHAPTER V

ITALIAN EXPERIENCES

A TWO-DAYS' run and we were in Florence. During the first day the road had led us a flat course to Bologna. It had taken us through a district where field after field was devoted to the culture of cane, and had shown us the long thin-cut stalks bleaching in the sun. It had been a swift drive, for in the vicinity of the cane-ponds the atmosphere compelled one to travel at a high rate of speed. Bologna had agreeably surprised us. It had opened to us wide, clean streets, had showed us many porticoed and loggiaed buildings, and above all had interested us in its two leaning towers.

The second day's drive had been a complete contrast to that of the preceding one. Instead of a flat country through which to run, the road climbed up and over and down

the Apennines in giddy ascents and descents. It was an exciting trip; the highway was rather narrow, the corners sharp and dangerous, and the views into the deep, deep valleys which yawned from the very road's edge were breathless and awe-inspiring. We descended into Florence through a cloud of dust. Heavy traffic had made the surface of the road abominable, and we were out of patience with the stupid mules and their still more senseless drivers.

In spite of a sunny welcome we were all a little disappointed with Florence. It was not the splendid, spacious Tuscan city which we had believed it to be. Instead, where we had looked for stately palaces we found unimposing houses, and where we had expected broad thoroughfares, narrow streets met our eyes. The river, too—the “golden Arno” of the poets—seemed to us little more than a shallow stream which straggled its way through the city over a dam. But when our first impressions had worn off, when we had made a closer acquaintance with the place, we looked out upon it through different eyes.

There is an almost inexhaustible wealth of interest in the city. Art crowds upon art. In

the galleries the walls are hung with priceless canvases—masterpieces by Titian, Fra Angelico, Andrea del Sarto, and a host of others; and here also, beside these canvas masterpieces, one can see triumphs of the sculptors' art, such as the David, the Wrestlers, and the Medician Venus.

One of the principal objects of interest is the cathedral. This wonderful building rises from the surrounding houses in stately beauty. The whole edifice is built of variegated marbles which, when they are touched by the sun, glow in soft greys and greens and blacks. The most noteworthy part of the cathedral is the dome. This was designed by Michael Angelo; was executed by Brunelleschi, and rivals that other creation of the master-architect—the St. Peter's dome at Rome. To the side of the cathedral springs Giotto's tower; and immediately in front is the baptistery, whose bronze doors of Lorenzo Ghiberti were said by Michael Angelo to be worthy of the Gates of Paradise.

Of all the bridges which span the Arno, the Ponte Vecchio is the oldest as well as the most curious. It is a queer link joining the opposite banks, with houses lining either side, save for

the three open arches in the centre. On top runs a passageway from the Pitti Palace to the Uffizi Gallery, and over this, long ago people other than tourists and sight-seers used to hurry from one palace to the other.

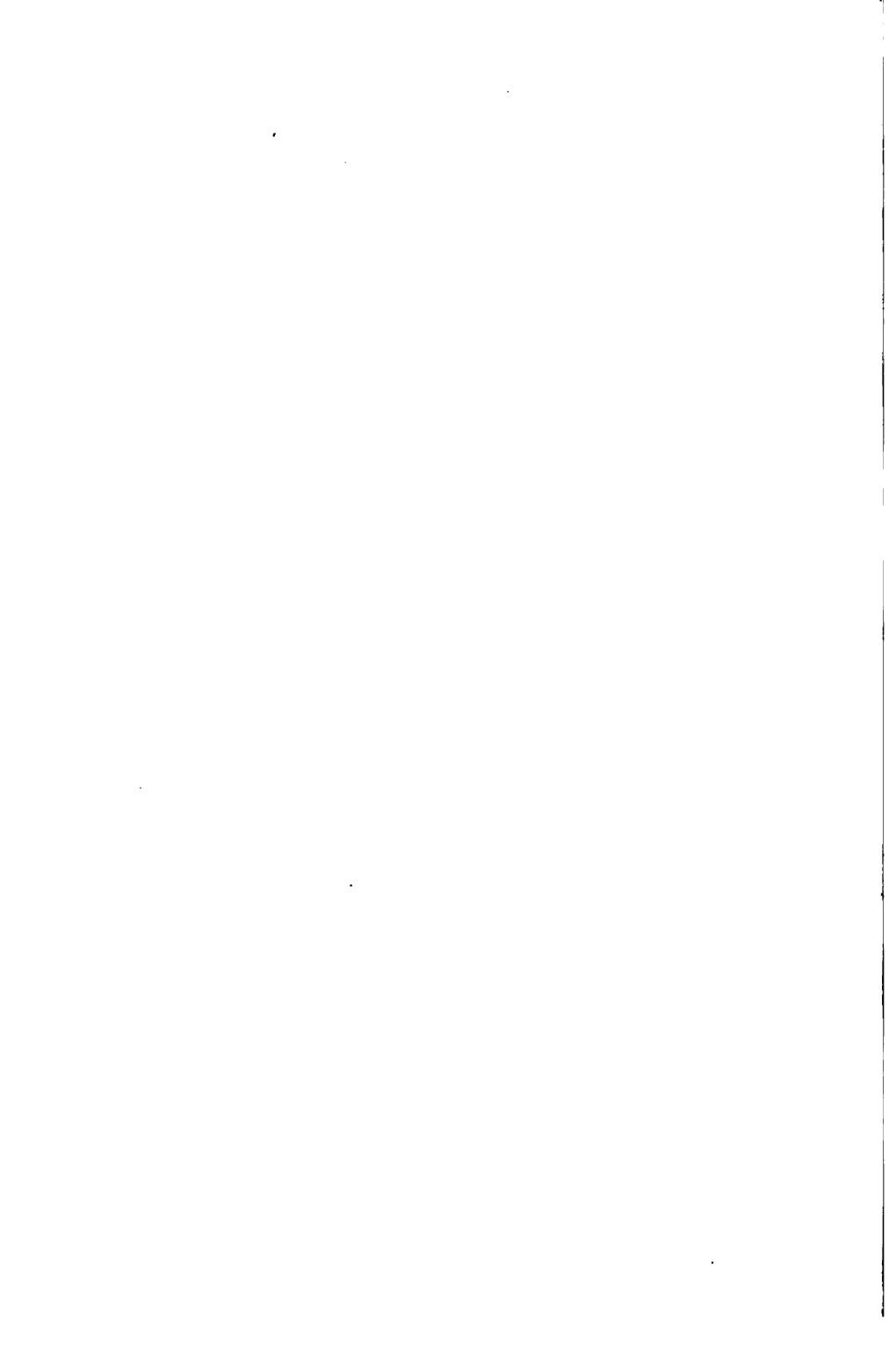
We left the city, filled with thoughts of Dante and Michael Angelo and Savonarola and Lorenzo the magnificent.

After one has left Florence the road leads for a long time beside the golden Arno. It is a very picturesque route taking one through pretty country. On the high rolling hills outside of the Tuscan city, are many stately villas. Their outspreading gardens and their tall cypress trees give the characteristically Italian touch to the landscape. The greater number of them are more or less pretentious: long avenues of cypresses lead up to them; graceful statues adorn the grounds; and the houses themselves are often embattled and towered, half mediæval in their appearance.

Shortly after leaving Arretzo, the road skirts the shores of Lake Trasimene, winding its way through vineyards and olive orchards. The lake is a very beautiful sheet of water, surrounded by gently-swelling hills. Along its shores several ancient towns rise up—



Chenonceaux: The Chateau



each a collection of old buildings and odd streets. The lake is particularly interesting for other reasons than that of its beauty. Centuries ago it was the scene of a bloody battle between the legions of Rome and the Carthaginians. The latter, under Hannibal, defeated the consular army; and had Hannibal followed up his victory by a march on Rome, he would in all probability have captured it without much difficulty and thereby have changed the destinies of both Rome and Carthage.

Behind the lake, the country breaks away in sloping hills and broadening plains. The slopes run wild in vineyards—a riot of vineyards and olive orchards which extend as far as the eye can see and blur the landscape in a grey-green mantle. And all the way to Perugia one runs through a delightful country of grape and olive, and always sees spread out on all sides—to the north, south, east, and west—a vast undulating sea of fruitfulness.

Rather an exciting experience befell us shortly before we had entered Perugia. We were coming out of a steep little village and were just at the top of a sharp hill. Coming up this were five pairs of oxen. They were

dragging heavy carts loaded with wood, and beside them their drivers were walking. The first pair passed the motor without much more than a curious glance at the machine. But the other four took fright and stopped point-blank on the hill. In fact, they began backing down again. Their drivers—passionate Italians, who were as hot-tempered as they were dirty—became enraged. They rushed madly forward, shouting and swearing at us to turn the car back. But this was impossible to do, as the road was too narrow. When they saw that we did not carry out their demands, they became more infuriated than ever. Rushing up to the car, some of them grabbed hold of the hood and shook it violently, while others beat upon the trunks behind with sticks. Out of the crowd which had gathered around the car only one man kept his head. This was the driver of the first pair of oxen. After a long discussion with his companions, he finally persuaded them that we had stopped with the best of intentions in order to allow the carts to get up the hill.

We got away at length, leaving in our rear an angry group of gesticulating men. It was nothing more than an unpleasant four or five

minutes; but we decided that to pass oxcarts without any such disturbances was much more agreeable.

Perugia is a hill-town. It is the quaintest and oddest place imaginable perched, as it is, on the summit of a steeply-rising surge of land—a mediæval town with mediæval buildings and old-world churches. The view from the walls is superb, and the air on account of the height is clear and fresh. The Roman remains are noteworthy. Many such hill-cities are passed on the journey down to Rome. They are a characteristic feature of the landscape of middle Italy. They are all very much alike. Steep ascents lead up to them; stout walls protect them; huge gateways give entrance to them; and their buildings—dilapidated buildings, with tiled roofs and crazy windows—look as if they might tumble down the hillsides at any moment. From afar, they tantalise one by their picturesqueness, and allure one by their oddity. Unfortunately it is impossible to stop to explore every one of them.

The road winds on in a mountainous route to Rome. Forever clinging to the sides of the hills, it makes its way, looping and twisting

and turning and climbing and descending until one is breathless for the very want of a flat stretch for awhile. But after the Tiber has been crossed, and a few lesser hills scaled, it flings itself out in straighter lines through a more even country.

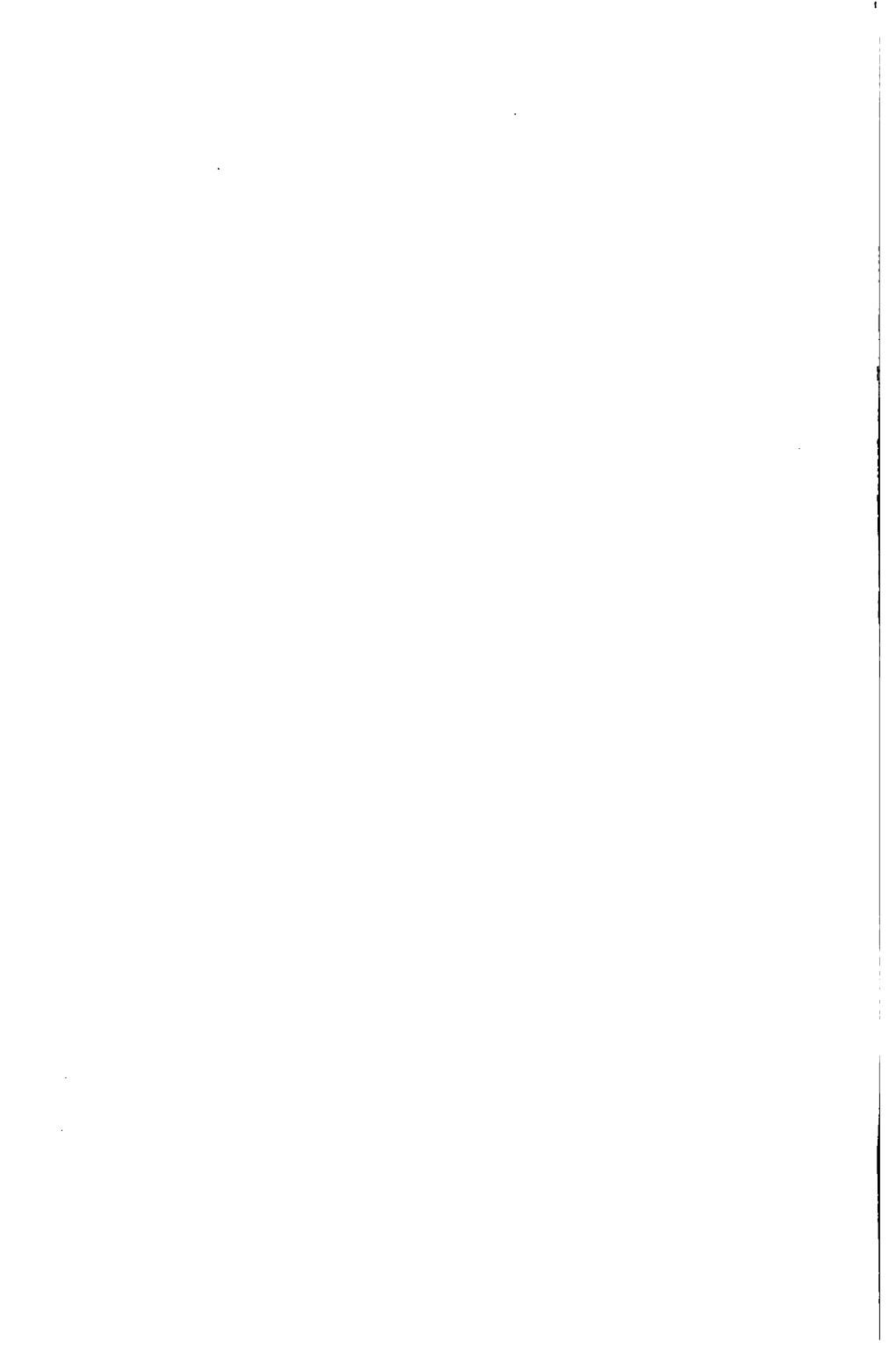
It was dark when we descended upon the Eternal City. Already the lights were twinkling in the windows and the streets were brilliant with the glare of lamps. It was our introduction to the city of the Cæsars, and we slipped in with mingled emotions.

A few days' stay—alas! too short—in this most remarkable of cities, and we were on our way again. The call of the road had urged us forward and had compelled us to leave even if we fain would have stayed. But if we had entered Rome with nothing more than a literature acquaintance with the city, we came away filled with a personal knowledge. The Colosseum and the Forums and the Appian Way and the hundred and one other historical monuments were now no longer known to us through the pages of a book. We had seen them and were satisfied.

The road followed the coast and gave us



Chenonceaux: The Moat



glimpses of the Mediterranean every now and then as it skirted along the shore. It was a flat drive and a contrast from the hilly route to Rome from Florence. There were no interesting towns on the way with perhaps the exception of Civita-Veccchia; and so we did not stop but continued onward to Grosseto.

Not one of us is ever likely to forget Grosseto. It was there that an experience of a lifetime happened to us. We had put up at a very small inn—the only one in the town of any consequence—in which no one was able to speak English or French. However, after a great deal of gesticulating, we had managed to make ourselves understood. We had secured rooms, had gone to bed early, and were all sound asleep when an incident as unexpected as it was terrifying awakened us. The beds began to shake; the pictures rattled on the walls; the furniture creaked noisily; and the whole building swayed and seemed about to collapse. It was an earthquake. The shock was so unexpected that we could scarcely realise what had happened. We rushed to each others' rooms to see if any one of us was hurt, and then dressed in all haste and hurried down-stairs.

The little town went wild. In a moment the thoroughfares were filled with excited throngs. Men, women, and children, with wild eyes and startled looks, with clothes donned hurriedly and garments awry, rushed from their houses and made for the open squares. In their arms they carried whatever they prized most—the men their money-bags, the women their babies—all making as fast as possible for some place of safety.

We immediately determined to leave the town. If a catastrophe were to occur it were better to be out in the open country, we thought. So at half-past two we left. As we passed through the streets, our lighted lamps showed up many pathetic pictures. Here, a little group of anxious people awaited restlessly some other sign of the earthquake. There, a man paced up and down the sidewalk, with only a few clothes and a dressing-gown flung about him. In another spot, a woman hugged tightly her savings, hiding them away beneath her apron, lest they might be snatched from her in an ensuing panic. In yet another place, terrified mothers gathered their little ones about them in a wild anxiety to keep together. And everywhere—

in the squares and in the streets, in every available open space—crowds of people were collected, whispering or talking or shouting in proportion to their fear.

We crept through and sought the country. Even after the gates had been passed and the town left we still met others, fleeing as ourselves to escape from buildings which might totter without warning if other shocks more violent than the first occurred. It was a glorious night. There was not a cloud in the sky and hardly a breath of wind stirred the leaves. Nothing was indicative of nature's internal uneasiness.

We pressed on through the darkness into an unfamiliar country with only our blazing front-lamps to show the way. It was a very ghostly drive. The hills looked mountain-size in the darkness—huge, indistinguishable objects which rose up in confused blurs against the sky; the fields stretched out from the roadside only to be swallowed up in gloom a few yards beyond the ditches; the cool, grey olives and the fig-trees appeared grotesque and contorted, all twisted out of shape as they stood sharpened in the light against the black background; and the road led on

and on like a narrow white thread, taking us always into a huge dark cavern.

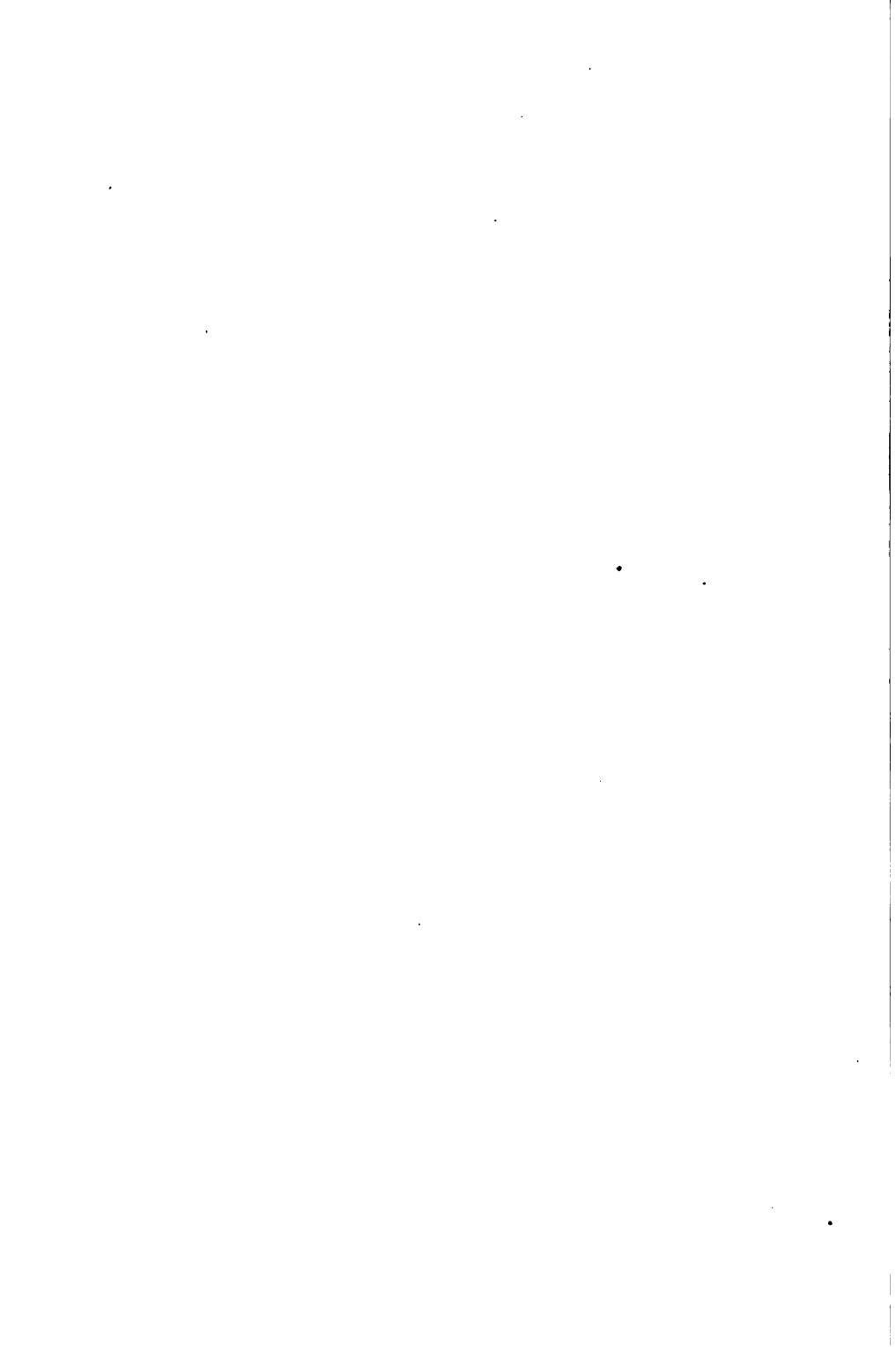
So we drove on until the dawn came. Then it grew lighter and lighter and finally the sun rose. With what joy we welcomed the sun! Its rays seemed to dispel the fears of those long dreary hours, and we looked back on to the night scarcely believing it to be more than a horrible nightmare.

Possessed of a desire to leave Italy as quickly as possible, we pressed on all day, with only a stop here and there to snatch a hurried meal. Only once did we halt to sight-see. Pisa could not be skipped through without a glance at its leaning tower, its cathedral, and its baptistery. We left the car in a semi-square while we paid a visit to these interesting buildings; and after we had admired the impressive interior of the great church, and delighted in the delicate carving of the crown-like baptistery, and wondered at the unique balance of the leaning tower, we returned again to the motor and left Pisa, regretting that our visit had been all too brief.

We intended to reach Genoa that night. But owing to an unforeseen obstacle in the shape of a mountain-range which had to be



Chenonceaux: The Donjon



crossed we were unable to arrive at our intended destination.

After leaving Spezia—that pretty town, with its palm trees which first suggested the tropics—we encountered this unlooked-for difficulty. We left the town by an ascent that outdid the Alps in steepness. The road serpented its way up the hillside in breathless twists and turns. It was while taking this climb that a narrow escape befell us. The road was very narrow. It was bordered on one side by a deep ditch and was protected, fortunately, at the turns by stone walls. The turns were very sharp—so sharp, in fact, that once or twice it was almost impossible for the car to round them. The motor was taking one of the most dangerous of these curves when suddenly the chauffeur, in order to avoid dropping the left front wheel into the ditch, throttled down the engine too quickly and thereby stopped it. He instantly applied the brakes. Both these and the sprag refused to work. The car began to slip backwards, gaining impetus every second. Had it not been for the stout stone wall which protected the corner, it would undoubtedly have crashed over the embankment. From that time onward

the drive was too thrilling to be enjoyable. The road led up and over the mountains in a dizzy ascent to the summit as it clung to the sides of the rock. Awful chasms yawned greedily hundreds of feet below; horrible unguarded corners overhung the abysses; and the road mounted in a drive which seemed interminable. Even the view at the summit hardly compensated for the terrors of the ascent, although it was truly glorious. Hundreds of feet below, beyond the tumultuous foreground of tossing mountains, the motionless sea stretched out to meet the sky, one vast expanse of grey. It looked all sky, no water, so indistinguishably seemed the one fused into the other. There was no semblance of a horizon line. An orange sunset gilded the western heavens in a golden glow and tipped the mountain-tops with fire. The valleys lay beneath, darkening as the light faded, and their scattered towns—faint blurs of white—showed like patches of snow against the sombre background. The descent, after the sun had sunk and when the mists were beginning to fog the landscape and the sea, was long and tortuous, and it was with many sighs of relief that we at length reached

a comfortable hotel in the darkened town of Sestri-Levante.

The next day we started for Genoa. The drive from Sestri-Levanti to the great shipping centre was similar to that of the preceding day. The same road was forever climbing and twisting and leading up high as it threaded its way along the hillsides. The only difference was the sea-scape of the Mediterranean to the left of us.

From Genoa the run along the Riviera to Monte Carlo is a series of delightful pictures. The road leads a most charming route, for always it takes along the coast and shows one the curving shore-line and the bright blue water. At times it mounts high up on the hillsides and gives glimpses of the sea below through a veil of fig and olive leaves. Then again it skirts low down along the shore, where one can hear quite plainly the wash of the water over the rocks and see distinctly the sand beneath the clear surface.

The different towns through which one passes are quaint and beautifully placed. Even the poorest of them looks inviting when seen from a distance, situated close beside the blue water and surrounded in the rear by the

olive-covered hills. They are odd little places with picturesque buildings lining their irregular streets. But one enters and leaves them quickly, for if they are not watering-places they are the reverse of health-resorts. San Remo, Monte Carlo, Nice, and Cannes lie on the route, and one passes them through, bestowing on each an almost equal admiration.



Tours; The Cathedral

CHAPTER VI

THE HOMEWARD FLIGHT TO PARIS

AIX-EN-PROVENCE is one of the most ancient of southern French towns. It was founded by the Roman proconsul, C. Sextius Calvinus, in 122 B.C., and was the first Roman colony on this side of the Alps. Near to it, in the plains of Pourrières, Marius destroyed the army of the Cimbrians and Teutons, two Gaulish tribes that were menacing Italy and Rome at that time. In later times King Réné d'Anjou held his court there, and Aix in his reign became a centre of art, music, and literature. It was formerly the capital of Provence and is still one of the principal cities in that part of the country.

But apart from the historical side of the question, Aix is interesting on account of its situation. It lies prettily placed in the midst of undulating country and is only separated

by a short distance from the coast and Marseilles. Its main street is particularly pleasing for it is a tree-lined avenue that cuts its way straight through the heart of the town.

A splendid road connects Aix with Avignon. It leads through a delightful country. On either side rich Provençal fields spread out in orchards of orange, almond, and olive. Everywhere one sees a wealth of fruitfulness. On the slopes lemons glint pale yellow as they peep from among the leaves; dull green figs show themselves clustering in great bunches to the twisted fig-trees; and all along the highway, running parallel with the ditches, the grey-green olive trees hold out branches laden with their ripening fruit.

One can hardly realise as one is whirled over such splendid roads and through such a prosperous landscape, that, centuries ago, the same countryside was little more than a stretch of waste land before the Romans came, founded colonies, and began to till and cultivate the soil. Even to-day the Roman influence upon the landscape can be remarked. Nowhere can one turn without encountering some reminder of that former

civilisation. Whether it be the remains of a triumphal arch or the ruins of an amphitheatre or the broken line of an aqueduct which reverts one's thoughts to Rome and her brilliant achievements, one is always conscious of the classical touch in this particular landscape of southern France.

But although it was a very charming district through which we were passing, for us the interest of the day's run centred in the towns rather than in the country. Avignon and Orange were two places that demanded a great deal of attention. Both were as ancient as they were historical. Both held out almost equal attractions to induce us to halt.

Ever since Avignon was founded by the Phoenicians about the year 600 B.C., until comparatively recent times, it has passed through many and varied vicissitudes of fortune. It was here in the fifth century that Gondebaud, king of the Bourguignons, defended himself vigorously against Clovis, king of the Franks; and here, too, during those warlike times many another siege took place to keep the city in a constant turmoil. But it was only after coming under the papal influence that Avignon saw less troublous times;

and of all periods of its history, this latter is perhaps the most interesting.

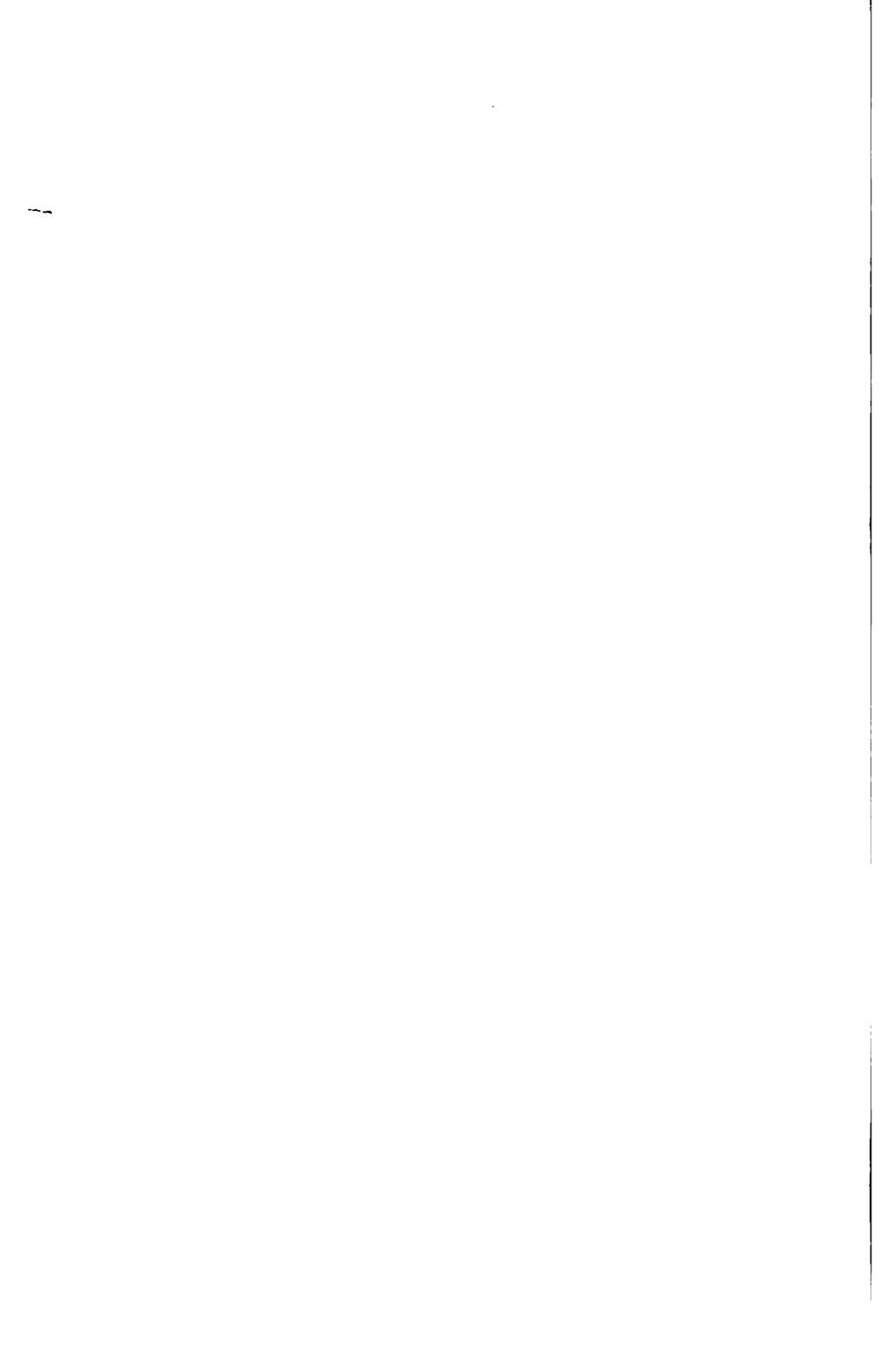
Foremost among its notable buildings is the Palace of the Popes. This edifice was formerly the seat of the few French Popes, but after Gregory XI. at the persuasion of Catherine of Sienna had re-established in 1376 the Papal See at Rome, it degenerated from a palace first into a public building, then into a barracks, then into a prison, and finally was bought, and is preserved as one of the most interesting of French national monuments.

Later in the day we drove on to Orange, and there spent some time exploring the ancient Roman amphitheatre and admiring the triumphal arch of Marius. This arch was erected to commemorate that consul's victory over the Teutons in the year 102 B.C.

From Orange the road reaches across country in straight lines. It runs for miles without turning, one long tree-bordered avenue. It dives into little towns and out again, still the taut line that cuts the fields in two, leaving the trees at the town's entrance, and taking them up again just beyond the opposite outskirts. From between the *platanes* the fields can be seen running out from



The Château of Amboise



the highway in level reaches of orchard and pasture land—dusty grey patches where the olives turn their leaves to the breeze, green and open where the cattle feed in fawn-coloured groups among the grasses. And in the background to the left, the long, low-rising range of the lonely Cévennes rises up and hems in the landscape by a mountain wall. In the afternoon the highway joined in with the Rhone, and road and river raced away across country together. They divided later in the day, after the towns of Valence and St. Vallier had been passed through, for the former ran inland and took a more hilly course to St. Étienne.

From St. Étienne it was a two days' run to Loches. The road led a charming route and took us through many interesting little towns. There was Roanne with a market-filled square; La Palisse where an old feudal castle sprang from behind an obstruction of buildings—a gloomy turreted place overlooking the river Besbre; Montluçon, where an odd, old inn invited us to luncheon; and La Châtre, with its cathedral guarding the entrance to the town.

Soon after leaving La Châtre we came quite

unexpectedly upon a large house—a semi-château—standing some short distance beyond the fringe of dwellings that goes to make up the forlorn little hamlet of Nohant. The house stands close upon the road, half hidden by a mass of screening foliage, a plain, shuttered building which has very little of the château in it. It is unimposing and unpretentious. But if not architecturally interesting it is at least so from a literary standpoint. At one time it was the home of the celebrated novelist, George Sand. The house was closed as we passed by; the windows were boarded up, the doors shut, and a deserted air hung about the place. We did not stop, but slipped past with many a backward glance at the home of the great writer.

A little later in the afternoon we passed a country fair. For miles on either side of the pleasure ground the road was alive with waggons and country carriages, returning homeward, filled with the spoils of the fair. It was very amusing to look into some of them as we passed. Each seemed to have in it something to provoke laughter. In one a chorus of pigs was emitting protracted squeals; in another a frightened goat looked wildly

about to escape; while in a third, chickens enough to fill several roosts were crowded into small wicker boxes, the poor birds doubtless despairing of ever regaining the unrestrained freedom of a spacious barnyard. But most amusing of all was a stubborn donkey that persisted in dragging its master headlong into a ditch in spite of all his efforts to restrain it; and finally when the headstrong beast was brought to reason by a severe beating on the nose, it wore such a disgusted and scornful expression that we were sure it harboured many a revengeful thought and would later on repay its punishment in meting out well-aimed kicks.

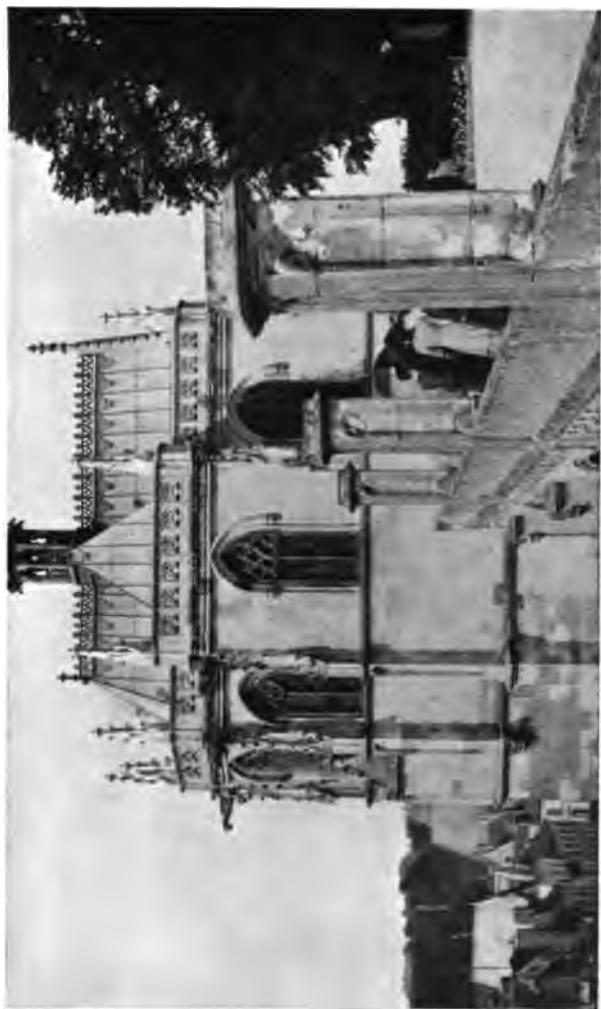
The countryside was delightful. Everywhere the fields were green and cared-for, cultivated to the very roadways by that industry so admirable in the French peasant. Beyond the ditches many flocks of woolly sheep were pasturing, tended by industrious little shepherdesses who passed the time in knitting. And very often along the roadside, too, old white-capped women looked after their cows or geese or goats employed in just the same manner.

In such surroundings it was easy to picture

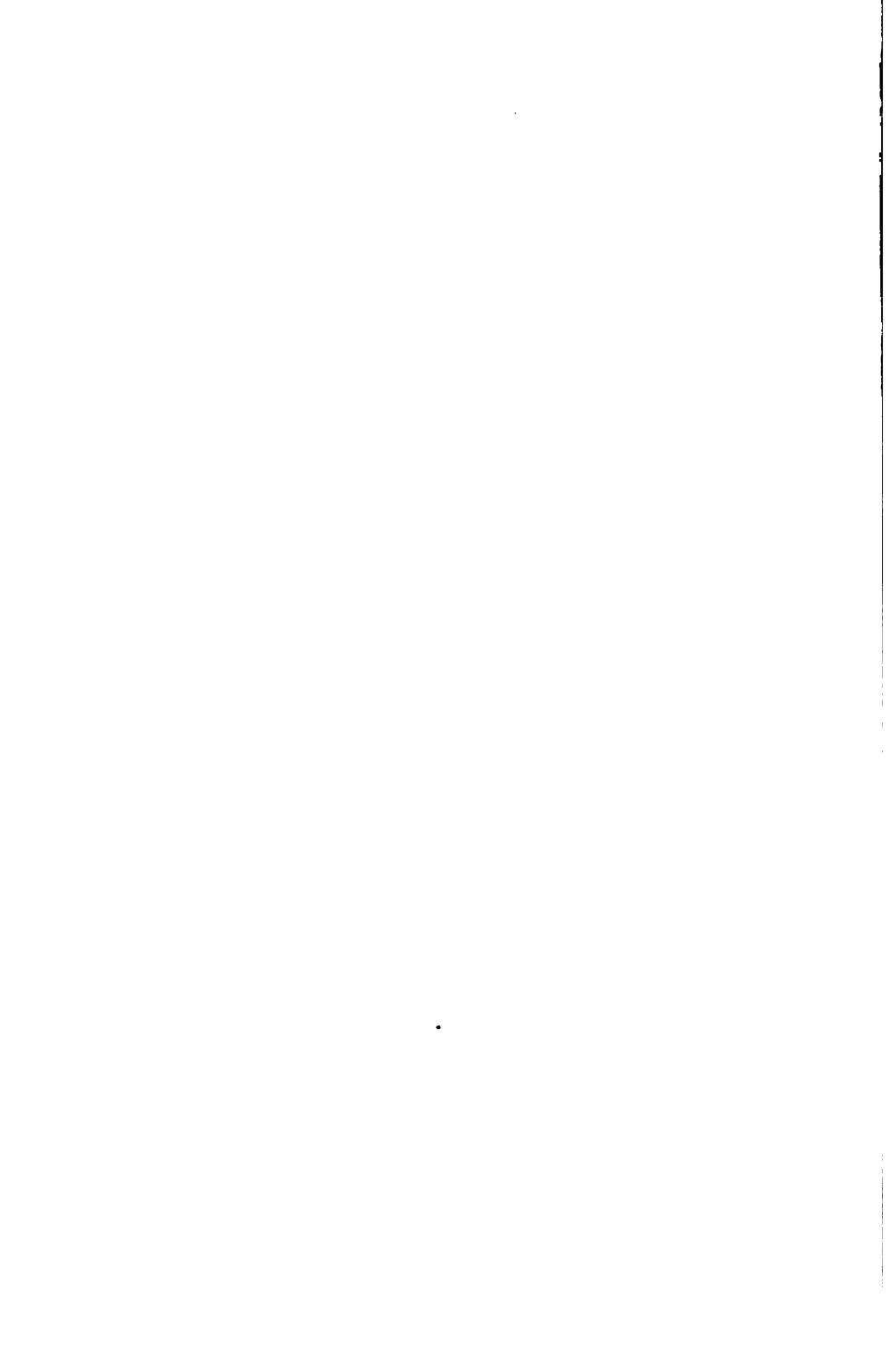
"La Petite Fadette" coming homeward after a day in the meadows, driving her geese before her; or Germain, *le fin laboureur*, ploughing, with his eight half-tamed oxen, the rich, brown earth "where, in some of the furrows, the recent rains had left thin lines of water, which looked like threads of silver in the sunlight"; or any other of the simple but delightful characters which figure in the two inimitable pastoral tales of George Sand.

Châteauroux, Chantillon-sur-Indre—a picturesque place with a ruined château and a thirteenth century donjon—and then Loches!

An exquisite sunset welcomed us to Loches. It washed the country in a yellow haze and cast a glamour of enchantment about the town. It struck prosaic roof-tops to dull copper and transformed a hundred windowpanes from dusty glass to burnished gold. But even without such a sunset Loches could be nothing but enchanting, for in the irregular grouping of its old-world houses, in the feudal aspect of its stout stone gateways, and above all, in the dignified aloofness of the Royal Château which so splendidly rears itself above the town, there lies a charm that at once fascinates and holds the visitor.



Amboise: The Chapel of St. Hubert



Of course one pays a visit to the château first. It acts as a magnet and draws one up from the town below quite unresistingly. It is a charming old building with round towers and cone-capped turrets, with an elevated terrace and Renaissance windows. It lives in an atmosphere of an historical past, for through its rooms and down its corridors many makers of history have walked. At every step one is confronted by reminders of Charles VII. and Agnes Sorel and Anne of Brittany. In the garden behind the château, the tree which was planted by Francis I. still gives shade against the sun, although now grown so heavy that it needs the support of great iron braces and chains. And then in the interior, after paying a visit to the tomb of Agnes Sorel and having seen her lying peacefully, her head between twin angels, her feet supported by two lambs; when one has examined the flower-surrounded monument to the dog of Anne of Brittany, one is conducted up a little turret stair and brought into the one-time oratory of the same Anne. It is a small square room with a single window and a low entrance-door, and its walls are patterned with the ermine and the fleur-de-lys,

the emblems of Brittany and France. Then when the visit is concluded, when many backward glances have been cast on its different turrets and its towers, one leaves the château regretfully and turns one's steps to other interest-spots.

Not far from the château is the church of Beaulieu, formerly the chapel of the castle; and a little farther on—a walk down a high-walled lane and under an avenue of trees brings one to it—is the donjon. It is a massive ruin around which many woes have centred. Princes and cardinals and bishops and lords and knights and others have languished within its walls. The stones, could they but speak, would relate many a horrible tale. But the donjon as it stands to-day, with little patches of ivy creeping across the walls here and there, and with the sun blazing into the tiny enclosed garden of the concierge—a garden in which there are all sorts of flowers blooming—strikes one now as nothing more than a beautiful ruin, not as formerly an object of hate and dread.

We tore ourselves away unwillingly from Loches. Time was flying with too-swift wings to permit a longer stay. Paris was looming

large on the near horizon of a day or two, and there was much to be seen between Loches and Paris.

A cross-country run brought us to Chinon. We crossed the Vienne to enter the town and then after lunch scrambled up the steep hill-side to view the castle ruins. After Loches, Chinon is disappointing. In spite of it being the death-place of two English kings, Henry II., and Richard, Cœur de Lion, and in spite of the fact that here Joan of Arc was first presented to Charles VII., it did not interest us as much as did the neighbouring château town.

So it was a brief visit we paid it. Not waiting to descend to the gloomy dungeons and only making an exterior acquaintance of the clock-tower, we drove on through the Forest of Chinon to Azay-le-Rideau. And there the exquisite little château—the jewel of Touraine—which quite reminds one of a creamy pearl set against a background of dark, green velvet, enthralled us by its perfect loveliness. It is ideally situated: it stands half-girded by the lazy Indre that makes its way over a soft bed of grasses and between green “margins willow-veiled.” It is

a wonderful little Renaissance creation with graceful corner towers, delicate window-cappings and white, gleaming walls,—a charming place, as full of interest as of beauty.

Regretfully we tore ourselves away. Our flight through the château country did not permit us to linger long. Brief, insufficient glances were better than none at all, and so we contented ourselves with short visits to the most interesting of these country seats.

All the way to Langeais the vision of the lovely Azay was ever before our eyes; and even when we had arrived there and had caught sight of that other splendid pile it was difficult to forget what we had left behind and to realise what was before us.

The château at Langeais rises up directly from the street in an orderly mass of feudal towers and turrets and stout stone walls. In this respect it is unlike Azay, for the latter is withdrawn from the village and set in the midst of a secluded park. Both buildings are totally different: one represents the old fortified castle of the mediæval times, while the other, the pleasure-house of a less war-like age. Drawbridges and iron portcullises, enormous walls and fortified towers are the



Blois: The Staircase of François I.

characteristics of the château at Langeais, and only a pretty garden within the court relieves the grim appearance of the building.

Again we came away with a blur of confused thoughts in which Charles VIII., and Anne of Brittany and their marriage chamber and the tapestries and the chests and a hundred-and-one other interesting things struggled equally for supremacy.

A short drive along the Loire brings one to Tours. The road leads through a charming country. On all sides low-lying fields run down to meet the river in bright green stretches. It follows along the water's edge, curving gently now and then as the shallow river makes its way across country, and all the while gives charming pictures of the opposite bank, the farther country, and, here and there, a distant château showing white between the trees. But even when the bridge has been crossed to enter Tours one is not done with sight-seeing: the cathedral claims one.

The wonderful building faces a square and raises an elaborately carved western front and two tall towers majestically above the surrounding houses. Three wide, arched doors

give entrance to the church, the middle one the largest of the three. The interior is plain but impressive, and the nave reaches out in narrow lines to meet the altar, unadorned by much carving nor weighed down by an ornate roof.

The next day we bade good-bye to Tours and followed up the Loire to Amboise. As we approached, we caught sight of the château from across the river and traversed the bridge to enter the town. The whole interest at Amboise, as at all these feudal Touraine towns, centres in the château. Its situation is somewhat similar to that of Loches, crowning, as it does, a flat, high-placed plateau and standing quite above the chimney-pots of its feudal town. We left the car in a shady square while we made a tour of the interesting building. It is approached through a rock-hewn drive that leads in a steep ascent to the garden, and one first catches sight of the pure white château across a brilliant mass of flowers. It stands V-shaped, looking towards the drive—an historical old building constructed under several reigns. It has played an important part in French history, and has housed many of the French

kings since the time when Charles VII. in 1434 confiscated it and added it to the royal possessions. In it Charles VIII. was born and died; Louis XII. and his mother, Louise de Savoie, passed several years there when that king was young; and, in 1560, from a high-placed balcony, the heartless Catherine de Médicis and the fainting Mary of Scots watched the slaughter of the conspirators who had intrigued against Francis II. and the Guises. The building itself is a picturesque pile, with a splendid façade fronting the Loire, and a huge round tower containing a spiral ascent up which light carriages and horses used long ago to mount in ascending from the town to the very court of the château.

But the little chapel of St. Hubert, which juts out beyond the rampart walls like a bird's nest overhanging a cottage's eaves, attracts first attention for it holds out such beauties in its stone carvings and such interest in its unique position that the visitor quite forgets the château which he has come to see. The exterior is a mass of delicate stonework, and the entrance-doors—over which a beautifully carved panel tells the story of St. Hubert and

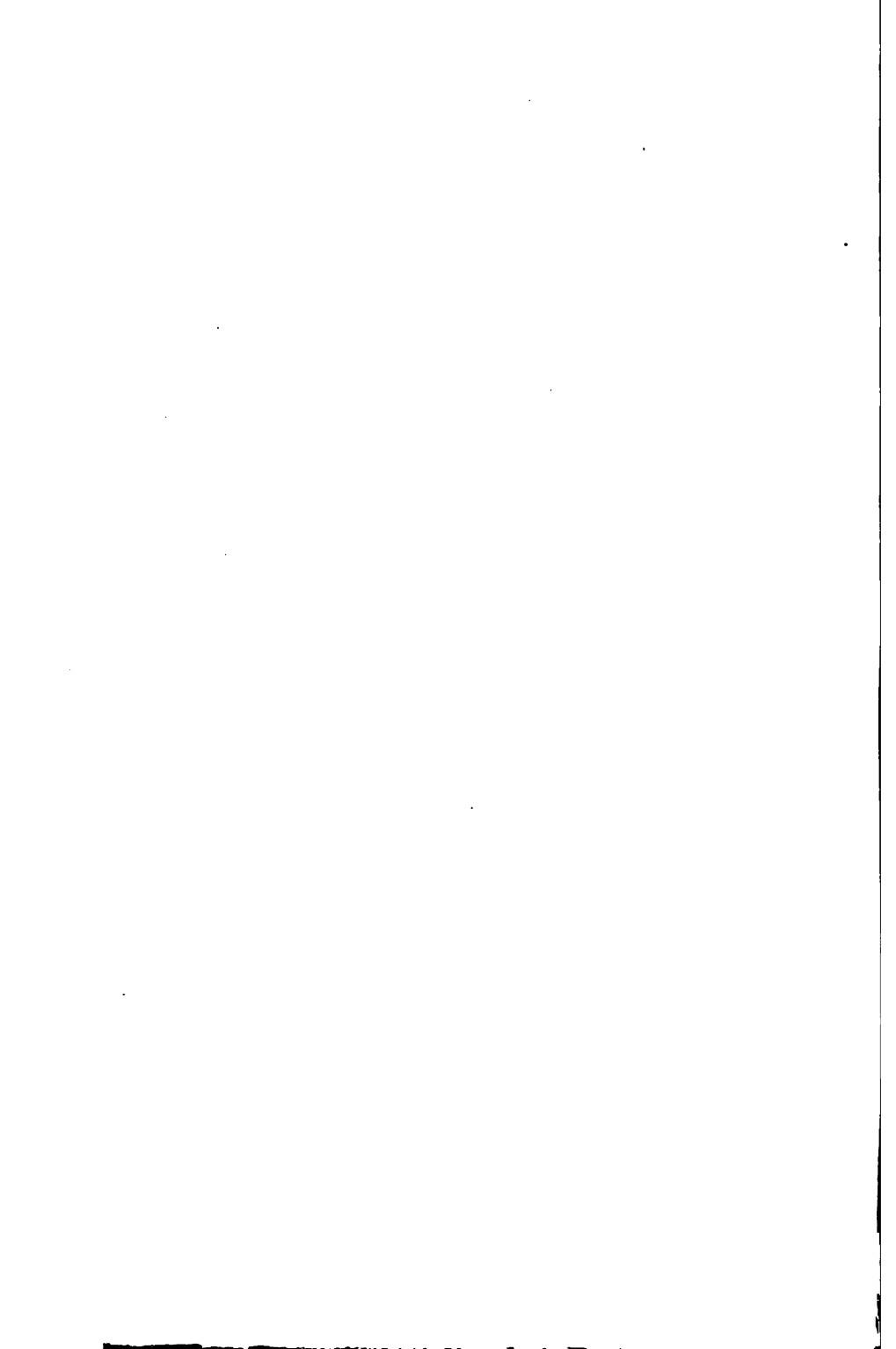
the stag—are very rich in detail. Perhaps the most interesting thing in the interior is the small slab that marks the place where the bones of the great Leonardo da Vinci are interred.

Then, after lingering long on the elevated terrace, after drinking deeply of the splendid view, and after examining curiously the little door against which it is said Charles VIII. struck his head and was killed, we left Amboise and made for Chenonceaux.

A delightful drive through the forest of Amboise brings one to this latter village. The road cuts its way through ranks of trees and stretches far ahead a long-drawn band of white. It is a cool drive, for the woods are damp with dew and a moist fragrance from the shaded inner spaces reaches to the roadside as the car glides by. All about, save for the white road and the little wild flowers that sometimes grow in coloured patches along the ditches, the predominant shade is green. It is a restful drive, and one quite loses thought of history and of château-lore while slipping down the silent avenues of the forest. But it does not last long. The surface of the road is good, the car goes quickly, and Chenonceaux is reached before one is quite ready for it.



Fontainebleau: The Chateau



One searches for the château first and when it is found at the outskirts of the village one leaves the motor at the entrance-gates. A walk down a splendid avenue of spreading trees gives incomplete glimpses of the building at the farther end, but these insufficient snatches only serve to heighten the expectancy for the whole pile to spring into view. Then after having caught a first complete sight, after walking about the gardens and admiring it from a hundred different angles—here where it shows best as it flings itself across the Cher on graceful arches, there where the donjon looms large on the foreground with the château standing only slightly behind, there again on the other side where the tiny chapel attracts all attention—one comes to the conclusion that of all these Touraine châteaux, Chenonceaux is perhaps the one that charms the most. One comes away with happy memories of brilliant gardens, of a rush-grown moat, of a tranquil river, and of an exquisite château.

A longer drive and we had reached Blois. After coming directly from Chenonceaux, we were a trifle disappointed with the castle there. There is nothing of the picturesque-

ness of the river-château in the buildings at Blois. It raises a wonderful front above the town, it is true, and offers a staircase that has no parallel in the Renaissance architecture, but after one has gone through its gloomy rooms and has heard tales of the cruel Catherine de Médicis, and has seen the secret recesses in which the treacherous queen used to conceal her poisons, one comes away filled more with a sense of gloom than with a sense of delight.

Orleans is reached after a delightful run through a sea of vineyard. The vines sweep back from the roadside in long lines of luscious fruit; and the great ripe grapes entice one to stop the car and to go and pluck them by the handful.

The next morning we left Joan of Arc's city. We had not time, unfortunately, to pay due deference to its many interest-spots, for it was the last day of our tour, and Paris had to be reached before nightfall.

All day, as we raced over the even highways, we realised that every step forward, each little village passed, each town run through, meant a lessening of the distance between us

and the journey's end. So we took a special delight in looking at the country for the last time. The wide-spread fields, the little villages, the long white roads, and the inviting lanes were all studied with a redoubled interest. Each rural picture seemed to have in it some characteristic upon which we had not remarked before. The grass that grew along the roadsides and carpeted the fields looked fresher and greener; the houses of the hamlets showed quainter gables and odder windows than had the dwellings in the other towns through which we had passed; the occasional oxen on the highways brought back reminders of Germany and Italy and made us wish that the road was leading a longer course and not winding itself up so quickly to the finish; and the country lanes, although not as pretty as the hedge-bordered English ones, had in them a double attraction as they led from the highway inviting us to explore.

There was still one interest-spot left to us, however. Another château full of historical associations broke half way this run to Paris. Fontainebleau had yet to be seen.

At a charming red-awninged hotel which

faced the Château—one in which every room was filled with old furniture and antiques of all sorts and whose walls were covered with rare prints and china plaques—we lunched, and afterwards went through the spacious palace that was at one time the favourite residence of Napoleon.

There is little wonder that the Emperor chose to spend a great part of his time in this delightful spot. Situated quite in the little town, with a street fronting it beyond a grass-grown court and with far-reaching gardens in the rear, it combined for him at once the practicabilities of a town residence with the attractions of a country seat. But to-day it is little more than a show-place; and one wanders through the various rooms quite bewildered by the different objects pointed out by a loquacious guide, and confused as to history by the tales told without any regard to chronological order of the Louis and Henris and of Napoleon, who at one period or another inhabited the château. When one comes away, however, it is with a renewed interest in the career of the great emperor and in the residence of which he was so fond.

We left regretfully. Once in the motor

again we realised that nothing now remained to interrupt our final flight to Paris. And Paris, usually so inviting, so full of fascination, had no particular attraction for us that afternoon. We would have much preferred to have turned our backs upon it and to have deserted it for another month or more while we made further excursions into the delightful country-side surrounding Tours; or to have taken a run to the Normandy and Brittany Coast to see the Breton fisher-folk at home, learn something of how they live, and explore and loiter in their characteristic sea-side villages. There was Mont-St.-Michel, with its wonderfully placed abbey and its atmosphere of the middle ages; Bayeux where Queen Matilda's celebrated tapestry is still to be seen; Caen with the near-by ruined abbeys—L'Abbaye aux Hommes, L'Abbaye aux Dames; and the various sea-port towns, Havre, Rouen, St. Malo, whose smack-filled harbours and quaint streets charm and delight the eye; and the innumerable runs along the coast where on one side lies the sea, while on the other wide, open country—all these pleasures had to be foregone in the relentless descent upon Paris.

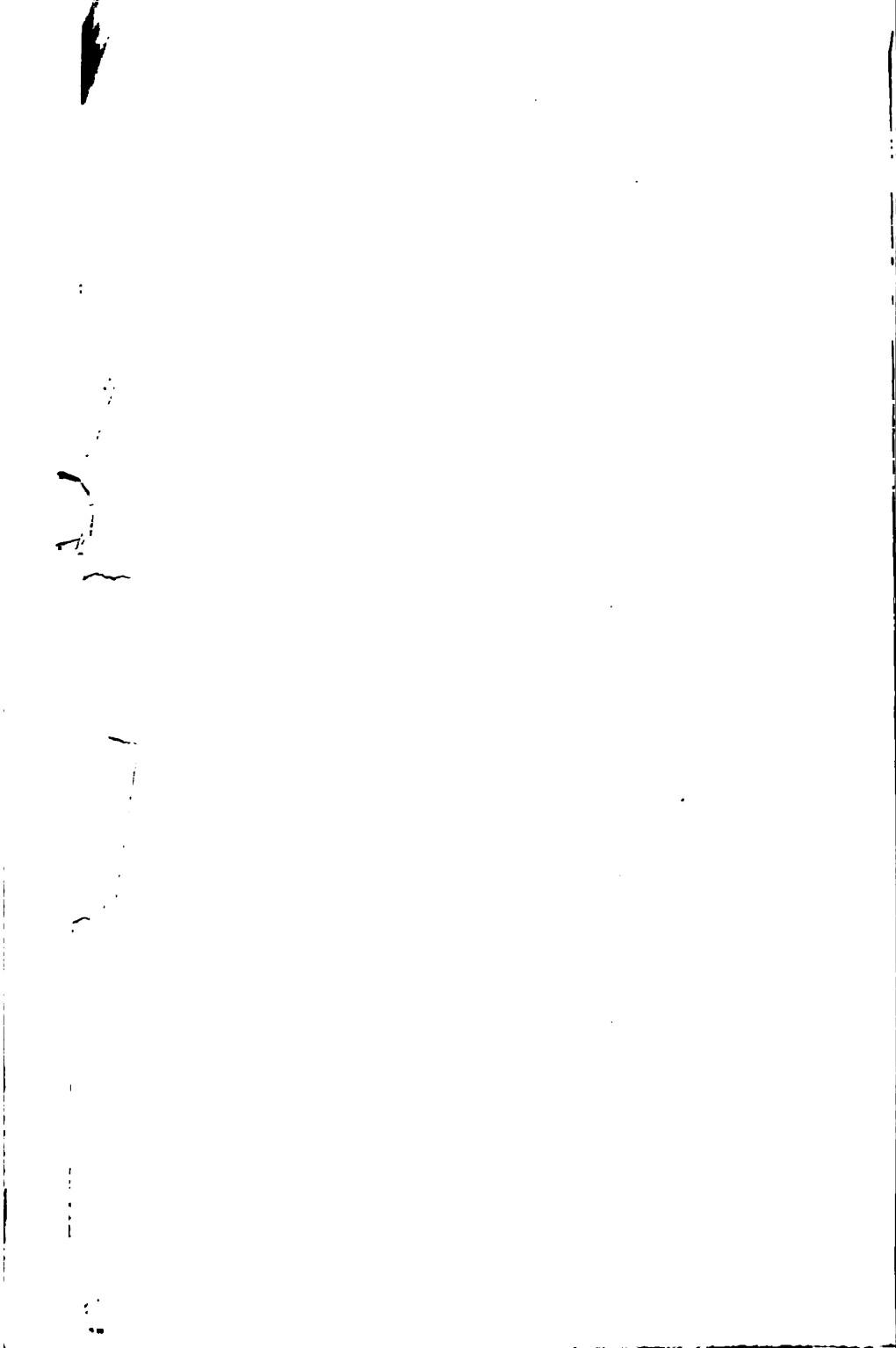
Each out-bound motor that passed, off for

a run in the country, caused us many regrets, tempted us to stop, turn, and make the swiftest retreat possible from the city ahead. It seemed to invite us to follow. We could not take our eyes from it, and we would watch until a vanishing spot on the road behind marked what was a moment previous a large touring car. We wished to forget that only a few miles in front lay the journey's end, and strove to imagine that on the morrow another day full of expectancy, of new delights and of varying scenes was awaiting us.

The consolation to the afternoon, however, was the fact that the run through the forest of Fontainebleau was among the most beautiful of all our woodland drives, and the glorious afternoon made us forget to a great extent our unwillingness to hasten onward. And thus it was that when Paris suddenly burst upon us, when a long, unending street opened up to receive us, when the Seine showed us its boats, its barges, and its bridges we were unprepared, and the regrets for the trip, vivid with so many delightful memories, were merged into the expectations of seeing the Capital of all this last, lovely land that we had only just traversed.

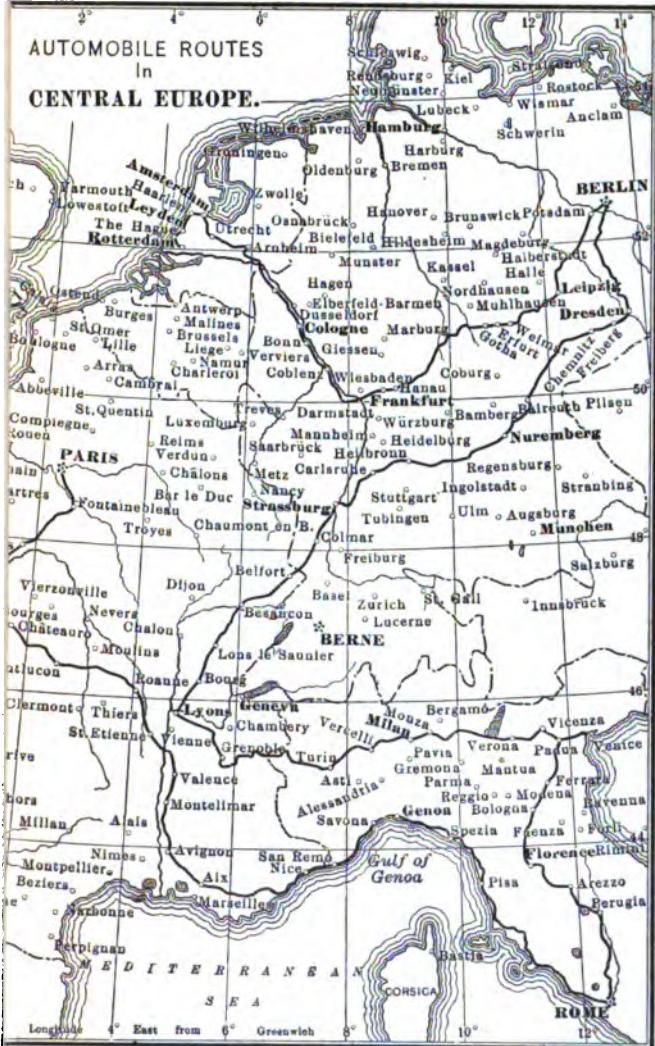
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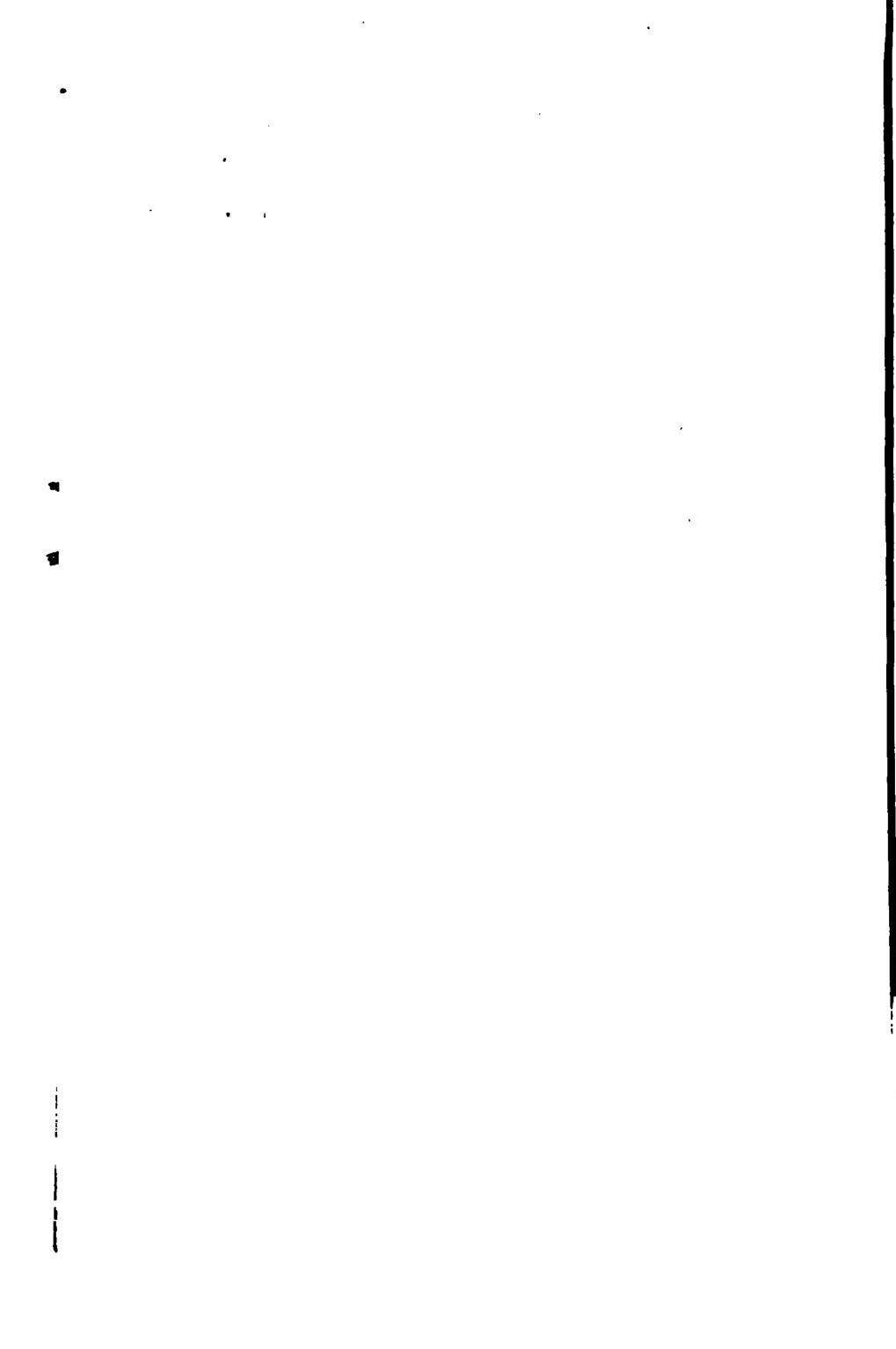




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